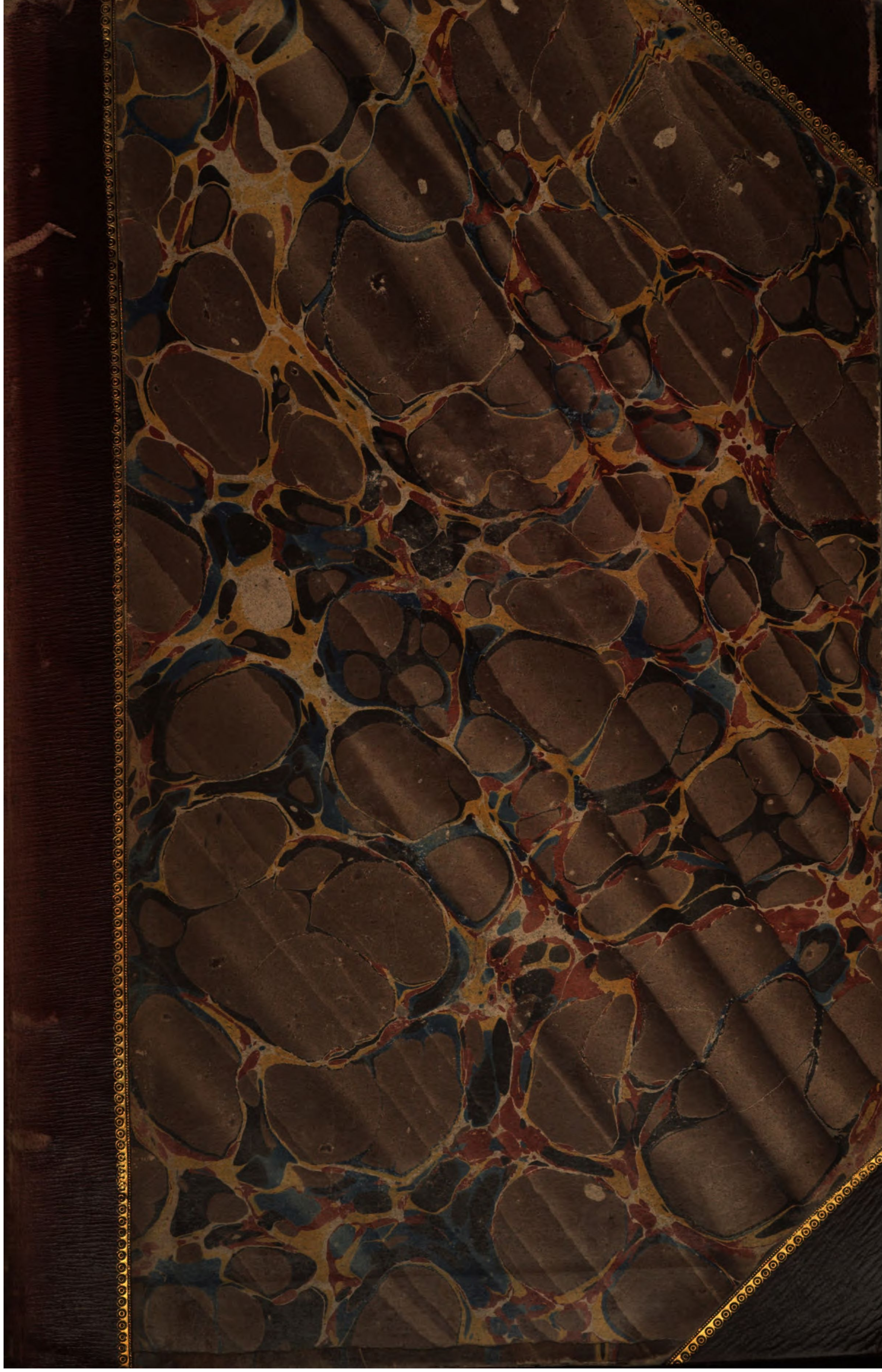
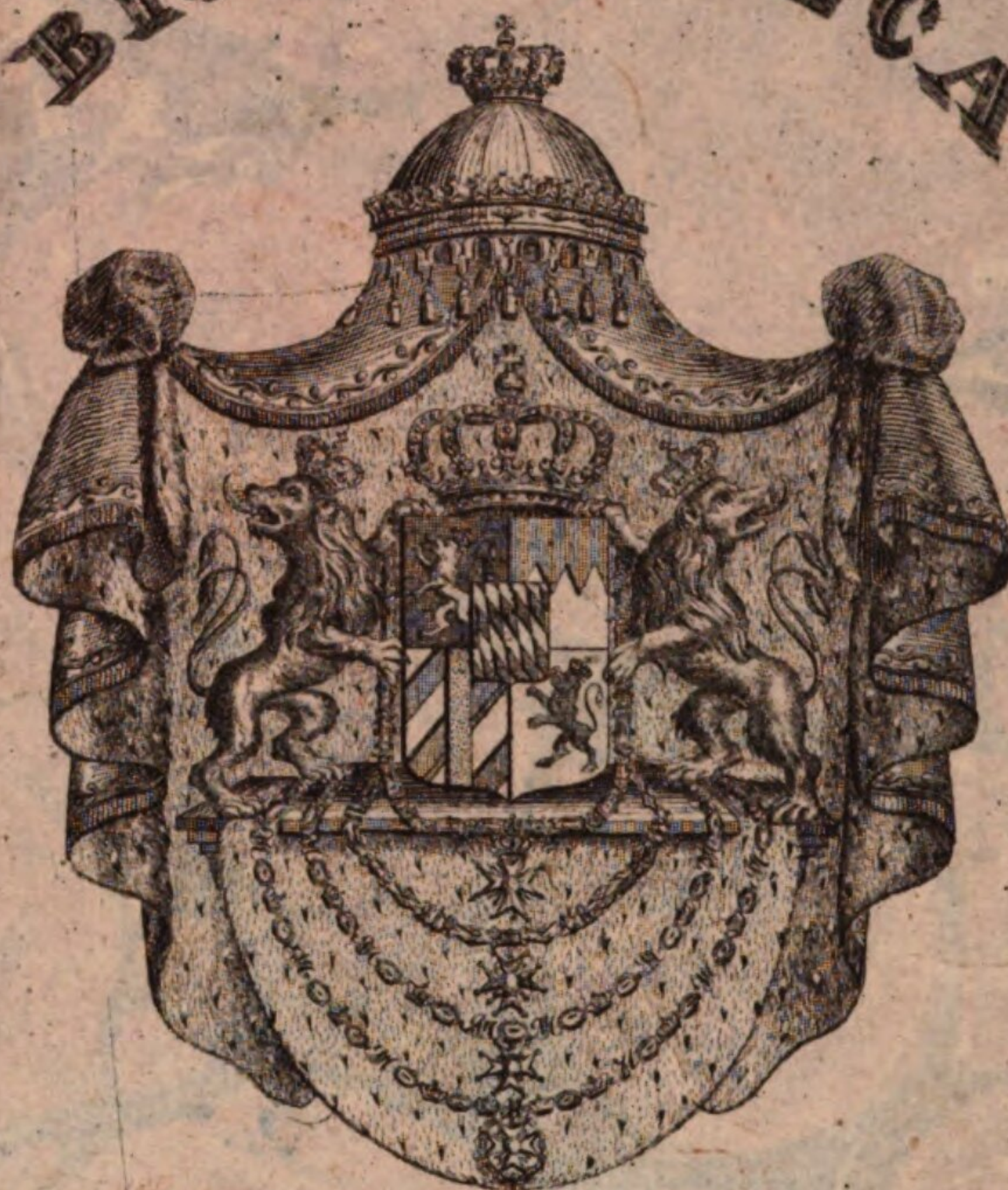
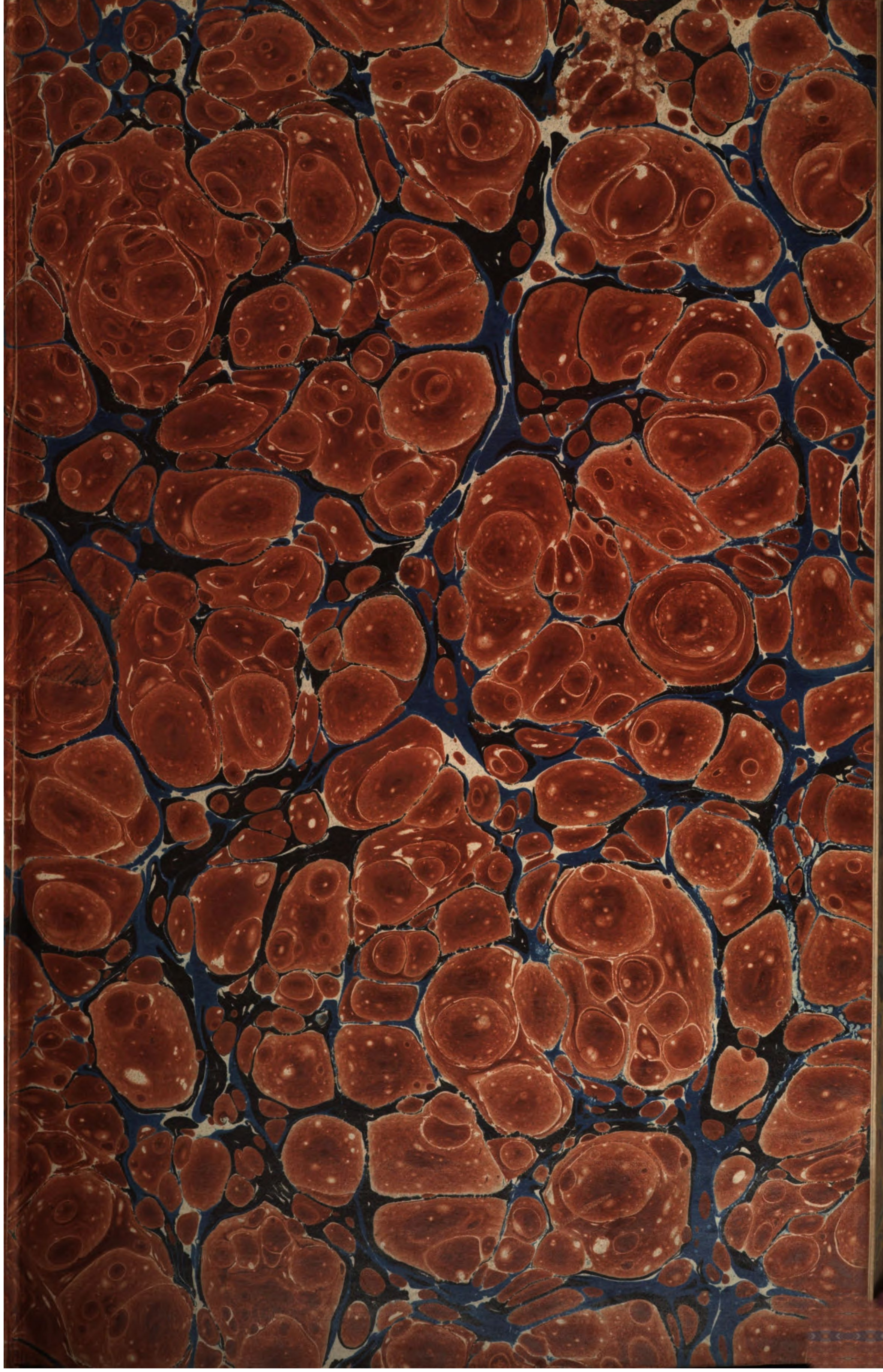




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1836.

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FROM

HIS MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS

FOR INQUIRING INTO THE

ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICAL OPERATION

OF

T H E P O O R L A W S .

APPENDIX (A.)
Reports of Assistant Commissioners,
PART II.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
21 February 1834.*

R E P O R T

HIS MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS

FOR EXAMINING INTO THE

ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICAL OPERATION

THE POOR LAWS

Appendix (A.)

Reports of Assistant Commissioners

Part II.

Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed

11 February 1834

A P P E N D I X (A.)

PART II.

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APPENDIX (A)

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CONFIDENTIAL - SECURITY INFORMATION

11

The following information was obtained from the records of the Department of the Army, Office of the Adjutant General, and is being furnished to you for your information.

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APPENDIX (A.)

continued.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

No. 23.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

REPORT from C. P. Villiers, Esq.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

THE districts which I visited were parts of Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, and the northern division of Devonshire. The character of the inquiry which it was alone possible to make within a limited period of time, has been contemplated in p. 7 of the Instructions.

I was able to examine some parishes in nearly every magisterial division in the county of Warwick, in the three principal hundreds of the county of Worcester, and in the adjoining parts of Gloucestershire; and I communicated personally with the overseers and other officers from the hundreds and principal towns in North Devon. These districts, in character, are partly agricultural and partly manufacturing; and in the midland counties, the population engaged in manufacture is much scattered throughout parts of the country called agricultural.

The three first-named counties being under circumstances strongly similar, it will be convenient to report upon them distinctly, in many respects, from the north division of Devon.

In adopting the order of inquiry recommended in the Instructions, the practical application of the law, including the form in which, and the persons to whom, parochial relief is distributed, will furnish the first subject of my Report.

Distribution.—I may here premise, that in each of these counties the relief is regulated upon the same general principle, namely, to relieve all claimants according to their alleged actual necessities, and that in each a separate table of relief, varying with the condition of the pauper and the price of bread, has been drawn up and published by the magistrates for the guidance of overseers; and though it may sometimes be stated that the previous circumstances or character of the pauper determines the amount of relief granted, it is clear, from the construction which is placed upon the provision of the law, that this consideration can rarely occur; and the scale above mentioned tends of necessity to remove any distinction of this kind. Expectation of relief is, therefore, never precluded, and gross fraud is prevented only by peculiar vigilance, and the particular security that may chance to be established for the purpose.

Form in which Relief is given.

Parochial Houses.—As establishments for the use of the poor, these are distinguished according to the purposes for which they are used, as poorhouses, or workhouses. What is termed a poorhouse, simply provides lodging for the poor, which may be either used by paupers settled in the parish, or by casual poor who are disabled or under suspended orders. No regular provision for diet is made, and little order or discipline is maintained in them. Some of the paupers who are placed there work for private employers, and maintain themselves; others receive pay from the parish, and also provide their own food. Houses of this description appeared in general to be dirty and disorderly. They are not common in Warwickshire, but are more frequently met with in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. The house at Broadway, in Worcestershire, is a specimen of these abodes; crowded and dirty, without classification, and to all appearance a receptacle for vice and disease. Two able men were lodged here with their parents, on the plea of sickness, and they had been observed at night conveying home huge loads of wood, which they had purloined. The inmates were apparently without control, and received each a weekly stipend for their maintenance. In some parishes a number of small houses are clustered together, where the poor are lodged without regard to number, age or sex, and receive allowances in money from the parish. Houses of this description I saw at Alcester, in the county of Warwick, where the proportion of the young and able-bodied greatly exceeded that of the old and infirm. The overseer stated that it was often difficult to dispossess the paupers when they were once placed in these houses, and that they were extremely anxious to be lodged in them. Of poorhouses that I saw, it may be said that they appear calculated to extend and confirm every bad habit among the poor, without promoting in any way the legitimate objects of the public provision. The advantage of these houses to a parish is the saving of rent, which the overseers say that they should be otherwise obliged to pay for cottages.

A *workhouse* is known by having a master or a matron, a regular dietary, and the inmates being subject to some control. Regular work as a means of employing the whole time of the inmates is not the practice in these houses. "House of industry" is only the term usually applied to workhouses of this description when incorporated or established under private Acts. Of these latter, the principal ones that I visited were at Coventry, Birmingham, Worcester and Tewkesbury. In the other principal towns and populous agricultural parishes I found workhouses established, especially throughout the county of Warwick. There are several well-built substantial incorporated houses, such as at Rugby, Bedworth, Meriden and

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Common purpose for
which used.
Exceptions.
Control.

Condition.

Average dietary.
Kenilworth.

Birmingham.

* See p. 33.

St. Peter's.

Meriden.

Annual expense.

Discipline.

Work with view to
profit.

Coventry.

Bromsgrove.

Result of.

and Coton, houses which might be rendered available should it be thought expedient to extend this mode of maintaining the poor; they are not occupied by one-third, and in some cases by a still less proportion of the full number they are capable of holding. These houses all resemble each other in two respects, namely, in the purpose for which they are used, and in the system upon which they are managed. This is chiefly in lodging and maintaining old and infirm people, orphans, deserted children, idiots, and women with bastard children during their month's confinement; the exceptions are in cases where the able-bodied poor are also placed there with the view to deter them from applying to the magistrates against the judgment of the parish. The practice of farming the poor having been very generally discontinued, from an impression that the poor were not well treated under that system, the management of these houses is under the immediate control of the parish officers, and with few exceptions, such as Old Swinford, in Worcestershire, I observed that they were clean, orderly, furnished with comfort, and generally well kept. They appeared to be regulated under some apprehension of public feeling on the subject. The masters or matrons were usually eager to display the comfort and good fare which the paupers enjoyed; and I was confidently assured, in more than one instance, that they were better off than some of the rate-payers, as if it was imagined that a contrary opinion prevailed; indeed the management of all these houses appeared to place the paupers in a better condition than the independent poor. The following is the dietary in the house at Kenilworth, which is perhaps below the average of the houses in these counties: three meals a day, hot meat three times a week for dinner, soup, porridge, beer, cheese, bread and vegetables at the other times.

The dietary at Birmingham, mentioned in another place,* is a specimen of the fare in the larger houses of industry. The cost per head in these houses varies considerably.

At Bengeworth, St. Peter's, Evesham, the paupers have been kept without complaint for 17 years upon the same fare as is provided in the Worcester gaol, at 2s. 5½d. per week,† and the numbers have never exceeded 18 or fallen below 12. At Meriden, in Warwickshire, a large incorporated house, containing at times upwards of 100 persons, one of the visitors stated that the inmates were maintained at a cost of 6s. per head, and the expenses of other houses appeared to vary between these two sums. The case of St. Peter's is a proof of what saving might be effected in the management of these houses. It is simply due to the intelligence of a magistrate who resides in the parish, and is the visiting magistrate at the gaol at Worcester.

In the great proportion of the replies sent from these districts, the annual expense, including every charge, is stated at from 8l. to 10l.

The discipline or restraint imposed in these houses is far from strict. When visiting them during the daytime, the greater number of inmates were usually from home. The only classification consists of separate dormitories for the sexes, there being also small separate rooms for the married people. When the inmates are regularly employed, it is chiefly with a view to profit, or to set against their maintenance. In several I observed the remains of some machinery where manufacture had been attempted with a view to profit, but which, upon inquiry, I found to have uniformly failed. The work of the poor in the house at Coventry is hired to a manufacturer, which, perhaps, is the mode in which workhouse labour is turned to the best account for the parish; but the objection appears to be sound against parishes competing with other producers, in its tendency to diminish the fund for the employment of the independent poor. In the house at Bromsgrove, the manufacture of nails was carried on, and the injury frequently done to the manufacturers in consequence, had led to a resolution in the vestry, that the stock on hand should on no account be sold at the market price, but only at an advance upon that amount. It appeared, however, that a great accumulation of their stock took place, and upon the first defalcation of the rates, it had been sold for what it would fetch.

The discipline which has been adopted in a few instances throughout the kingdom, such as the separation of the sexes, and the prohibition of luxuries, such as snuff and tobacco, was

† ORDERS for the DIET of the POOR in the WORKHOUSE of the Parish of Bengeworth, established under the Act of the 22d G. 3.—3d June 1815.

	Bread.	Meat.	Oatmeal.	Pease.	Potatoes.	Cheese.	Salt.
Sunday and Thursday	1 lb.	½ lb.	1½ oz.	-	1 lb.	-	¼ oz.
Monday and Tuesday	1 lb.	-	1½ oz.	1 pint	-	-	¼ oz.
Wednesday and Friday	1½ lb.	-	1½ oz.	-	1 lb.	2 oz.	¼ oz.
Saturday	1 lb.	-	1½ oz.	-	1 lb.	2 oz.	½ oz.
	8 lb.	1 lb.	10½ oz.	2 pints	5 lbs.	6 oz.	2 oz.

The articles of diet are to be delivered on Wednesday and Saturday.

4 oz. of bacon may be given three days in the week, instead of one pound of fresh meat.

Children under ten years of age to be allowed half the above quantities.

The surgeon to make such orders for the sick as he may deem necessary.

(signed)

Th. Beale Cooper,

Guardian, &c.

4 Jan. 1816.

It having been found that the women sell their bread, it is ordered that their allowance be reduced to seven pounds of bread per week.

was a principle of management that appeared not to be understood, or indeed recommended by many of the parish authorities I examined. Their objection to this improvement, however, is only consistent with the system upon which the poor are generally managed, which is never with the view to prevent pauperism, but always upon the assumption that it is inevitable. It is now considered good economy to keep the able-bodied men out of the house, upon the assumption that they must be paupers, a measure to which, notwithstanding the good fare of these houses, they readily accede, and even consent to receive smaller sums than the cost of their maintenance to avoid entering them. This can only be referred to a strong moral feeling, and it prevails peculiarly among the married men with families; it appears to proceed less from a love of independence than a fear of shame. It is considered a disgraceful mode of receiving parish relief.

Able-bodied take less than cost of maintenance in the house.

The practice has now long obtained throughout the country of paying men out of the house according to the number of their family. When an exception is therefore made to this practice, it is supposed to mark the character of the pauper, and to imply a suspicion of imposture. To avoid this stigma, the paupers will submit to great privations, or look for work for themselves.

Reason of.

In the cases of Rugby, Clifton upon Dunsmore and Woolford, where the allowance system has been abolished, it has been chiefly effected by acting upon this known feeling among them, and offering relief only in the house, which they have refused. It is, however, observed that wherever paupers are induced to overcome this feeling, and become familiar with a workhouse life, it is with difficulty that they are induced to quit them. In Warwick, a man who had fractured his arm was obliged to enter the house; he was little more than 30 at the time; his wife was allowed to come to live with him, and they were both maintained in the house. He has had three children by her in the house since that time; he has been living there for some years, and is now averse to quit it. At Coventry, where the comfort of the house is the study of the directors, one of those officers stated, that he observed the paupers still to have great reluctance to enter, but still greater to leave it when once accustomed to its advantages. The house at Worcester is remarkable for its comfort and cleanliness; the governor, however, states that out of 15 families offered admission only five would enter. An instance is mentioned at Kidderminster of a man refusing 30s. a week, as his acceptance would be the means of removing his family from the house where he knew that they were comfortable. The governor is said to have stated in a report to the vestry, that no less than 40 persons ought to be expelled, as having other means of procuring their livelihood; while numberless cases were mentioned of all relief being refused when offered upon the condition of receiving it in the house. The dislike now entertained by the poor to being relieved in the house is without question, but in considering the policy of executing the law in this form exclusively, an apprehension was expressed that this feeling would wear off, and that it might be then attended with many evils which are not obvious at present. A particular parish may now be reformed by means of a workhouse, from the opinion that prevails amongst the poor generally on the subject; but the conclusion in favour of the same result is not necessary if the same system should be generally adopted. It is not by the discomfort or the strictness of these houses that pauperism has been prevented, but by the prejudice against the mode of relief. It is therefore difficult to calculate upon the effect of stricter discipline when relief should be given exclusively thus. It is incompatible with the institution of the Poor Laws to force in these houses the strictness of discipline adopted in prisons. It might then be a question whether, if all shame in entering them was removed, a calculation might not be made for a residence in them for a portion of the year, by those who are disposed to be improvident during the remainder. It was observed by some overseers, whom I examined on this point, that if young men were to work together in great numbers, talking and associating together, that they might soon overcome their objection to enter. In the county of Warwick I was informed that some men were in the habit of committing offences for the express purpose of being committed to gaol: the certainty of resuming their liberty whenever they were disposed, and of being concealed from public view, would not discourage them in such a course with respect to the workhouse. At Exeter I observed myself about 20 young men at work together in the house of industry; the work appeared to be hard and tedious; they had, however, every appearance of being happy and satisfied, and the governor was obliged to order them twice to desist from laughing, talking, singing and whistling, to prevent their disturbing the rest of the house. The cost of their maintenance was 5s. a week, and they worked 12 hours a day. An opinion moreover was expressed by many people that it would be impossible to classify persons strictly according to their character, to prevent the contamination of the good by the bad. The consequences of this evil is established by the evidence lately taken before a Committee of the House of Commons on the subject of Secondary Punishments. The discipline suggested as a remedy in that case could not be enforced in the workhouse. It would be impossible to compel silence upon the inmates when at work, equally so to condemn them to solitary labour. It would be impossible to extend the time of paupers remaining in the house beyond that to which they may feel inclined, equally so to prevent their desiring to enter in numbers beyond the possibility of their admission. There are times moreover in manufacturing districts where this might frequently occur, and when, without any blame to themselves, some people might be compelled by real necessity to seek relief, such for instance as those who, by the division of labour, are rendered dependent for occupation upon the conduct of others. These persons, by being brought in contact with the inmates of the house, might become demoralized and ruined in character for life.

Allowance-system abolished by workhouse. Workhouse life preferred by some. Warwick.

Coventry.

Worcester.

Kidderminster.

Policy of giving relief exclusively in the Workhouse considered.

Exeter.

These objections were urged upon me when canvassing opinions as to the expediency of confining all relief to the poor in this form; but a very general desire was expressed amongst all

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Workhouses generally recommended.

Medical Relief.

Prevailing practice.

Results.

Self-supporting dispensaries.

Mr. Smith, founder of.

Object of.

For whose benefit.

Medical attendance.

Results.

all classes with whom I conversed, that workhouses should be more generally used* and more economically managed, and little doubt was entertained that a vast saving might be effected, not only by deterring many from applying for relief who will only receive it when awarded in money, but also by shortening the duration of their dependence, in many who would be unwilling to submit to the discipline which ought to be established.

In reporting therefore, most correctly, the opinions of the persons who had considered this subject, I should say that workhouses were only viewed as one of the means by which the public provision could be administered with the least mischief. To rescue individuals from the extreme consequence of want is perhaps all that the law can wisely undertake, and by establishments of this kind it appears possible to effect this with great economy.

Medical Relief.—The following statement, given to me by a surgeon in Warwickshire, conversant with the parochial system of providing medical relief, describes the prevailing practice in these counties. “At Easter the overseers of the poor invite a statement from all the medical men within reach of the parish, of the lowest terms on which they will attend the poor for the ensuing year. They are requested to make an estimate of the value of their time, service and drugs in the relief of every disorder to which the paupers of the parish may be exposed, sometimes including the vaccination of children and attendance on women in labour.”

Dr. Calvert, M.D., of Althorp, accurately describes, in a printed notice, the results of my inquiries on the effect of this system. “The doctor is badly paid, and the poor badly attended. Diseases increase which might be diminished, labour is lost which would have increased the resources of the individual; he then is maintained by the parish, becomes dissatisfied, &c.” * * * * * “It may be asked why the doctors undertake this contract: this is the reason, they want either to get into practice themselves, or to keep out a rival, and what they receive only repays them when they do this.” The salary I found to vary from 10*l.* to 40*l.* per annum, and bearing generally but little proportion to the skill and attention which was required for the proper treatment of the patients, which is indeed implied by these gentlemen themselves, in their charges for attending paupers not settled in the parish being invariably higher than for those whom they are bound by this contract to attend. With a view to a discontinuance of a system no less mischievous than cruel, I cannot better convey to the Commission the suggestions of improvement that I collected, than by directing their attention to the principle and operation of the self-supporting dispensaries, the founder of whom, Mr. Smith, resides at Southam, in Warwickshire, in which county several very successful experiments of the system have been made. This gentleman directed his attention to this subject, from observing the sad consequences attendant upon farming the sick poor, and was led to devise the self-supporting dispensary, from observations that he had made himself on the character and wants of the poor. Amongst these was a peculiar disposition in the poor to select for themselves their own medical attendant, and an aversion on that account to receive this assistance from the parish. He observed that to accomplish this, numbers of the poor either contracted debts with their own attendant which they were unable to pay, or resorted to the impostors who travelled the country dispensing their specifics at a lower cost. Still, however, he observes that an application for the attendance of the parish doctor is in the larger proportion of cases the first step taken in pauperism, which, he says, upon his own experience is seldom or ever retraced; he finds in many parishes that the sick cases are far more numerous than any other individually in which the poor are relieved; in one parish he states that while 140 were receiving regular pay from the parish, 400 were being attended by the parish doctor, and in the parish of Marylebone in Middlesex, he found that the proportion of sick cases to all others together was as 40 to 60; and from the very frequent instances that he has seen in which relief in sickness has ended in an habitual dependence upon the parish, he attaches great importance to these facts. The first great object of his institution is, therefore, to enable the poor to preserve their independence; and at the same time, while superior skill and attendance are provided, an opportunity is afforded for the judicious exercise of private charity, and parishes are enabled more worthily to perform their obligation with the poor. He has classified those whom he proposes to benefit by this institution into *three* kinds: into *the willing and able*, whom he terms the free class, *the willing and unable*, called the charity class, and *the pauper class*, who are wholly dependent on public provision. The funds of the dispensary are therefore to be derived from three sources; first, from the subscription of free members, the subscriptions of benevolent persons, and from sums paid by parishes. Free members to contribute one penny each week, under 15 years one halfpenny. Honorary subscribers to recommend one charity patient for each 10*s.* 6*d.*, parishes to contribute for each 100 of population.

Every regularly-educated practitioner residing in the district to be allowed to offer himself; the patients to be allowed to have the advice of the practitioner whom they may prefer. Medical officers to be remunerated according to the number of patients each has attended.

The results which have attended the scheme are most satisfactory to Mr. Smith, as confirming the correctness of his judgment in expecting that the free, independent class would be the most numerous, and as indicating good natural disposition in the people to provide for themselves, whenever properly encouraged.

* Having been at Warwick, and Worcester on the market days, I had the opportunity of collecting the opinions of a considerable number of farmers and other persons connected with different parishes in those counties, and without one exception they strongly recommended the more general adoption of this mode of relief.

In the Report lately published at Coventry, by a committee managing the affairs of a dispensary upon the plan above detailed, the order in which free members have increased:

1st Admission, 18th July 1831	50
Number in August amounted to	150
" in September	390
" in October	830
" in November	1,150
" in December	1,270
" in January 1832	1,540
" in February	1,930
" in March	2,280

Reports.

G. P. Villiers, Esq.

Coventry.

Patients attended from the commencement of the institution, from July 1831 to March 1832, 1,505; cured, 1,189; relieved, 101; dead, 19; under treatment, 186; midwifery cases, 10. In the above list are included several surgical operations.

The committee state, that the system pursued by the dispensary is of general advantage to the city, and that during the late severe depression of trade, this institution prevented many industrious and deserving persons from being compelled to seek medical and other relief from the parish. The whole expense of attending 1,505 patients, from July 1831 to March 1832, had been only 126*l.* 7*s.* 11*d.*!

Report of Committee.

From the Report of a self-supporting dispensary, established at Birmingham, the following results are stated: "By the report of the surgeons, it appears that 1,406 cases have been attended; of this number 34 are midwifery, and 1,372 sick; and that more than six-sevenths are independent patients, who have paid their own expenses. On the year preceding, the total number was 833, of which 642 (nearly four-fifths) were independent. The committee state, that the income of the year has been fully equal to the current expenditure. In the parish of Aston, adjoining Birmingham, the number of patients admitted from June 1830 to March 1831, had been 707, of which 553 are free members, supporting their own expenses, and 128 charity patients; of these there have been cured 469; relieved, 39; died, 24; under treatment, 149." The committee state themselves perfectly satisfied with the institutions. At Atherstone, 874, of which 765 are free members; 589 of whom have been discharged cured; 15 dead. The committee in their Report state, that in tracing the progress of the institution, from the commencement to the present time, they have only to express unmixed satisfaction.

Birmingham.

A dispensary of this nature has been established at Derby. The committee, in making their first annual Report, state that they have no hesitation in declaring, from the experience they have had of the operations of the institution, that the first object has been satisfactorily obtained. The number of subscribers to the free class is already 530, and is rapidly increasing; adding, that it is a gratifying proof that the working classes only require to be made sensible of its advantages duly to appreciate them.

Derby.

In the village of Wellsbourne a dispensary has been established with equal success. In the first passage of the Sixth Report, it is stated that the number of the industrious contributing free members is still on the increase; that several new candidates were on the list for admission; that 194 persons had received relief from the dispensary during the last half year.

Village of Westbourne.

At Southam, where Mr. Smith resides, when the dispensary was first established, out of a population of 1,161, 681 lived by daily labour; of these 145 were regular paupers, and 400 were receiving medical relief. Since which, 170 have become free members of the dispensary, and have ceased to be attended by the parish doctor; and 30 persons belonging to other parishes, who would either have been removed as becoming chargeable, or have occasioned a heavy expense to their parishes for attendance, have been relieved as free members.

Southam.

Connecting Mr. Smith's observations of the effects of parochial relief in sickness with the success which has attended his attempts to remedy the evil, a more general establishment of these institutions seems to be most desirable. They appear to be admirably adapted, and immediately applicable to large cities and their neighbourhood, and as being well calculated to check a fruitful source of pauperism, I have thought it right to draw the attention of the Commission to the subject. Mr. Smith is desirous that they should be placed upon the same footing as all friendly and benefit societies incorporated under Act of Parliament; and if, indeed, upon further inquiry, it should appear that their advantage was likely to be permanent, this suggestion seems to be well deserving of consideration.

Mr. Smith's wish respecting them.

Rent.—The payment of rent by the parish as a mode of relief was very generally disavowed by the overseers; and it is so, apparently, from the known abuses to which it is open, either in houses being built on speculation for the occupation of paupers, or in jobbing by interested persons in the distribution of relief. There can be little doubt, however, that in many places where the practice is denied, that it is effected by some means indirectly, since the parish officers appeared to distinguish between granting a pauper the means of paying the rent and making the payment avowedly for the purpose themselves. At Kidderminster, Stourbridge, and in many other of the manufacturing districts, it is not denied that it is done occasionally, or that many of the small houses and cottages which are thus paid for are owned by a few proprietors. In many of these places the manufacturers let houses to their own men, and stop the rent out of their wages, which men may afterwards obtain relief, on the ground of their families and the insufficiency of their wages; and as the masters may be either vestrymen or magistrates, this, it may be expected, would not be difficult to obtain. It is needless to add, how extremely injudicious is this mode of conferring relief, since there is no circumstance more

Rent.

Manufacturing District.

Appendix (A.)	calculated to promote the early contract of marriage among the poor than the prospect of a rent-free dwelling, or, consequently, to add to the amount of pauperism.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	<i>Persons to whom Relief is given.</i> —The two classes of paupers indicated in the Instructions, namely, the impotent by nature or accident, and the able-bodied, are usually relieved upon a different system. There appears to be no fixed rule as to the form in which the impotent are maintained; the result of inquiry in many parishes was, that they are provided for in whatever mode the overseer or parochial authority for the time being may consider cheap or convenient. If there is a parish house, some of the old and infirm may be made to enter, and are there lodged, fed and clothed, with all the comfort which those asylums afford; if, however, they consent to take a lesser sum than the cost of their maintenance in the house, this would be granted, and little or no inquiry is made, in most parishes, into the ability of the relatives to support them. The overseers say that the magistrates are unwilling to enforce the law in this respect; and an active magistrate in Worcestershire, in his written statement, states that it is impossible to discover any measure of ability in the relative. The following is the reply to this inquiry, which the overseer of Aston, in Warwickshire (population 57,000), has written: "The overseer applied for an order to compel a son to maintain his father, who was more than 80 years old, and offered to prove (presumptive proof) the son worth upwards of 2,000 <i>l.</i> , when a full bench of Birmingham magistrates determined to receive nothing but positive proof, and threw the onus upon the overseers to prove that the estate was not encumbered; and as it was impossible, from the nature of the thing, to do this, the overseer was refused, and no attempt has since been made to enforce the law." The sums allowed to the old people out of the house are, in some parishes, 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> or 3 <i>s.</i> a week; in others, 4 <i>s.</i> , 5 <i>s.</i> , and in some instances 6 <i>s.</i> might be allowed. The most economical method of maintaining them is said to be in granting them a small sum, and allowing them to live with some of their relations, or in some house rent free. The impotent from old age, however, appear to be considered the legitimate objects of parochial support; and their claim is so little disputed, and it is usually awarded in a form so convenient to themselves, that they are in fact left without a motive in their youth to provide for the emergency themselves. The calculations of the friendly societies have proved fallacious; and the poor feel, that for the purpose of a future permanent provision, they would be unwise, under the parochial system, to make any sacrifice of their present earnings. This is a feeling, however, of recent date among the poor, since, in the recollection of many persons that I met with, the aged had an equal aversion with the young and able to receive support from the parish.*
Persons to whom Relief is given.	
Impotent.	
How relieved.	
Law not enforced against relatives.	
Aston case.	
Supposed economy in maintaining them.	
Results.	
Infant poor.	The impotent from infancy, without the protection of parents, including orphans, deserted children, and bastards not maintained by the mother, together with idiots, are generally placed in the parish house, wherever there is one. Orphans and deserted children are maintained in the house until the ages of from 9 to 14, when they may be apprenticed to farmers or tradespeople; and wherever there is a manufactory in the neighbourhood which affords employment to children, they are placed out at an earlier age; and upon the evidence of many respectable persons, but little attention is ever paid to the character of the master. In some houses work is taken in from the manufacturers of the town, in other towns the children are let out by the day, as at Warwick, to a pin-manufactory, and return to the house in the evening. The difference in many of these manufacturing districts between pauper children and the children of the independent poor, is in the work being given out to the parents of the latter, who employ their children at their own houses, while the pauper children are either bound to masters who take them into their own houses, or they remain in the workhouse till a later period than their age would require. The immediate interest of the parishes is to relieve themselves of their charge, or to turn their work to some present advantage; they care little, therefore, for their prospects in after life, and, what is of great importance, they are indifferent to the general consequences of bringing them up to trades already overstocked. At Coventry, for instance, the children are brought up to be weavers, because a manufacturer in the town hires their work, though they may be the children of weavers who allege that they are starving from there being no demand for their labour. In the workhouse at Worcester, they are brought up to glove-making, though the grievance in the town is that the trade is leaving it. In the house at Broomsgrove, in Worcestershire, the employment is making nails, at which the children all work; this business is also overstocked, and there is a general complaint among the farmers in the neighbourhood, that they cannot get domestic servants, because they are all brought up to nailing. At Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire, various trades are said to be taught, and children are bound to the master of the house till they can be assigned to masters in the town; but here again it is much the practice to teach them stocking-weaving, while hundreds in that trade are unemployed.
Orphans.	
How employed.	
Interest of parishes.	
Coventry.	
Worcester.	
Broomsgrove.	
Warwickshire: Half Apprentices.	In the villages where the ribbon-weaving is carried on, in the north division of Warwickshire, children are bound as half apprentices to masters, who contract to do the work with the manufacturers, half the earnings being allowed for the apprentice. These children, varying in age from ten to sixteen, are shut up in a small room of their master's house, males

* I was informed by different persons who remembered the fact, that there were several parishes in each of these counties where, within 40 years, no rate was made for the poor, and that some old people were with the greatest difficulty persuaded to accept nominal relief, with the view of preventing their parish from being rated in aid of some other parish: and there cannot be a doubt that there are many of the aged poor now that would discover the means of supporting themselves, were they offered relief in a workhouse. Upon my asking an old woman, who is receiving 2*s.* 6*d.* a week from one parish, whether she would consent to be maintained in a house, her answer was, "No, that I wouldn't; I would die first." She was in fact in service, receiving 3*s.* 6*d.* a week with her board and lodging.

males and females working together: they receive the work in the beginning of the week, and are only bound to complete it by the end. The practice among them is to idle during the first part of the week, and to recover the time by working day and night during the remainder, a system which is said to be injurious both to their health and their morals.

Upon inquiry in many parishes, whether any provision was made for the education of pauper children, it was usually said that there was a school in the house. This I observed to consist of a small outhouse attached to the workhouse, where a certain number of children of both sexes, from the ages of three to twelve, might be seen sitting on a bench, attended by an old male or female pauper, who having the reputation of being able to read, is expected to instruct the children. It was not often pretended that they learnt much, or often denied that they chiefly associated with the other inmates. In other cases these children are sent to the National School, where also reading is taught.

Birmingham alone affords an instance of superior and intelligent management with regard to the infant poor; the example of which is useful, as showing that in large districts this provision of the law can be executed, with good results both as regards society and the children. An Asylum is established for this purpose, which is able to hold upwards of 400 children; these are chiefly such as are without parents at all, or whose parents profess their inability to support them. The children are instructed in sundry trades, to which they may be afterwards bound; and a certain number of hours is set apart in each day for attending a school in the house, where they are taught to read and write. At the proper age they are apprenticed to masters in different trades, to whose character the greatest attention is paid; and the governor is required to visit and examine the masters and apprentices periodically, as a means of ascertaining the conduct of each. The children are thus maintained, while in the Asylum, at the rate of 2s. 6d. a head, including all expenses. The result has been proved by experience to be extremely favourable to them in after life. Mr. Knight, one of the guardians of the poor, and who has lately been very active in procuring an amended Act for the management of the poor in this town, was of opinion that the practice of maintaining the children separately from their parents, who seek relief on account of their families, was attended with advantage. This gentleman is very constant in his attendance at the weekly meetings at the workhouse, where applications for relief are made. He knew of many cases where applicants had discovered means of supporting their children when this mode of relief had been proposed to them, and he had in consequence attempted to procure the insertion of a clause in the late Act, providing that the infant children of persons applying for relief should be placed at infant schools during the day, thus affording an opportunity to the mother to procure some daily employment, which in a large town is often to be obtained. This clause, however, was rejected, the words "Infant School" being considered too indefinite by the Lords. Mr. Knight observes, however, that the charge of an infant family is a common plea, and one usually allowed for claiming relief without work, and that placing the children in these schools might have the double advantage of affording a test of the real indigence of the applicants, and as a means of giving some education to children who otherwise are living under every disadvantage. He had calculated that infant schools, providing one meal in the day, might be supported at an extremely low rate, and in the event of inadequate funds provided by the poor themselves, was precisely the kind of institution to attract voluntary subscription; and it is his opinion that there are many well-intentioned persons among the poor who would willingly save their independence, by contributing themselves to such a means of disposing of their infant families during the day; while, he said, it would be the means of defeating the object of the idle and worthless, in keeping their children at home to strengthen their own claim to relief.

Much importance is attached by many persons in this town to the education* of children, which by tending to raise the moral feeling of the working classes, affords the best check to pauperism in future, and this would perhaps be best accomplished by a separate maintenance of the children.

The policy, however, as a general rule, of maintaining the children of the poor separately from their parents, as a mode of relieving the latter, appears to be much questioned by many persons who have considered the subject.

In manufacturing towns like Birmingham, children may be a source of profit to the parent; and under these circumstances the offer to maintain them separately may afford some test of the real condition of the parent; but in other places it might act as encouragement to improvidence, in relieving persons from the charge of supporting children to whom they have given or may give birth.

The most intelligent persons that I examined appeared to consider that a safe and useful opportunity is offered for maintaining and educating the children of the poor separately from their parents, at the public expense, only when by any unforeseen event they have been left destitute; and it appeared to be a very general opinion that society would be amply repaid in securing to such objects a useful and moral education. Early depravity in these counties is the constant subject of remark, and the treatment of pauper children is often referred to as amongst its fertile sources. The prosecutions in the county of Warwick amount to 5,000*l.* a year, not including the Coventry district; and Sir Eardly Wilmot, who is chairman of the quarter sessions, has ascertained that one-half of these are of children

* As marking the interest entertained on this subject, and the quarter in which it was most strongly felt, I was informed that 14,099 children were then being educated by voluntary subscription, and that out of those, 11,500 belonged to the Dissenters, and 2,500 to the Establishment.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Education.

Birmingham.

Asylum for infant poor.

Expenses.

Mr. Knight.

Relief of children separately from their parents considered.

Words "Infant School" considered indefinite by the Lords.

Education at Birmingham.

Maintaining children separately from parents.

When advisable.

Early depravity.

Proportion of the prosecutions which are of children.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Dr. Johnstone of
Birmingham.Mr. Bennett of
Tewkesbury.Treatment of chil-
dren by country
parishes.

Apprentices.

Bastardy.

Subject of complaint.

Evidence on which
child is affiliated.Why punishment is
not enforced.

Operation of the law.

Women threatened
with gaol upon re-
fusing to name a
Father.Men induced to
marry the woman.

children under age, and one-half again of these under the age of 15, facts which he in part attributes to the mode in which pauper children are now brought up.

Dr. Johnstone, of Edgbaston, whose benevolent interest in the welfare of the poor is well known at Birmingham, had paid great attention to this subject. He stated his belief that a large proportion of juvenile offenders had been parish apprentices bound to bad masters. Mr. Bennett, a respectable bookseller at Tewkesbury, stated that he had for 19 years been observing the influence and operation of the Poor Laws, and that among the many evils that attended their present administration, none had struck him as more unfortunate than the fate of the parish apprentices. He mentioned a recent instance of two girls who had been sent from a neighbouring parish to be apprenticed: from neglect of the master, within three years both were on the streets, one having been seen in company with a girl who had committed a theft, was transported; the other died of disease and misery. He stated that during the time when stocking-weaving was a better trade, he had seen "cart loads" of apprentices come into the town from the country parishes. He also mentioned instances where the masters, who were drunken, dissolute, and incapable of teaching any trade, were induced to receive the apprentice solely for the sake of the premium, and which was only offered by some parish to relieve itself of the charge of the child. He said that the profligate system he had witnessed during the war did not exist to the same extent at present; but this he ascribed to the trade being bad, and to the greater interest which every body now felt in preventing the town from being overwhelmed with idle people.

The system of compelling the rate-payers to receive apprentices according to the amount of their assessment has been generally discontinued, owing to the opportunity which the manufactures offer in these counties for early employment, and the dislike of the rate-payers themselves to the practice. With regard to any change in the apprentice laws, no decided opinion was expressed to me. More importance seemed to be attached to a more careful selection of the masters and the previous education of the child, than to the duration of time for which they are now bound; and an anxious desire was expressed by some persons that if it should not be thought expedient to educate and maintain the pauper children upon some better system than the present, that some means should be taken to locate them in such of our colonies as would offer the best prospect of advantage to themselves and to the colony. A great annual expense would thus, it was said, be saved to this country, and the prospects of the children be very greatly improved. No part of the inquiry deserves more consideration, for it lies at the root of so much misery.

Bastardy.—The mode of providing for illegitimate children I found to be a subject of very general complaint, arising chiefly from a prevalent belief that bastardy is extending under the influence of the law itself, and the mode in which that law is applied. The evidence, by means of which a woman fixes upon a man the charge of maintaining her bastard child, is slighter than is received upon any occasion of equal importance, consisting merely of her own oath, unsupported by any facts. I found the practice to be invariable, to regulate the order of maintenance by the circumstances of the man selected. This is never less, and frequently is more than sufficient to support the child; and, whatever may be the amount, it is always paid by the parish to the mother. The punishment of the woman, as provided for by law, is rarely enforced: overseers either do not apply for a committal, or magistrates are unwilling to commit; a fear of additional expense is the reason of the former, and sympathy with the woman, or an apprehension of adding to her depravity by a committal to bridewell, is usually assigned as the reason for the latter. The practical effect of the law is, therefore, the punishment of the man, with impunity, if not profit, to the woman. Consequences, also, of injurious tendency arise indirectly out of this system. From the liabilities which are cast upon parishes by means of bastardy, first, by conferring a settlement upon children so born, and secondly, from the difficulty of collecting the sums ordered upon the fathers, by which heavy losses are sustained, the overseers are induced to resort to practices highly injurious to the morals of the poor. Should the woman refuse to select a father for the child, she is threatened with imprisonment, and mercy is rarely shown should she persevere in her refusal; and when affiliation has been made, persuasion of every kind is practised to effect a marriage between the parties. This is more especially the case when the father is not settled in the woman's parish, as the marriage is the means of changing her settlement. The woman, therefore, learns that either by degrading herself originally she can obtain a husband, or by repeating the offence she can increase her income. Familiarity with such examples, and the advantages derived to the woman, have weakened, if not destroyed, the moral feelings of the poor; and in matters of this nature, parents are very generally said now to be regardless of the conduct of their children. The parish officers with whom I communicated seemed familiar with recent and common instances of fraud and depravity, consequent upon this system. From among many cases which were mentioned I have selected a few, illustrating the operation of the law of bastardy as generally applied.

Women threatened with Gaol upon refusing to name a Father.—At Alcester, Mr. Perkins, late assistant overseer, stated that he had occasion to commit four women to gaol, for refusing to name the father; that two had consented to name some men upon entering the gaol; and that the two others followed their example after remaining there one week.

Men induced to marry the Woman.—Upon examining the overseer of ——— who had filled his office 20 years, as to the practice of bribing men to marry, he said it was against the law; but that it was easy to show them how it would be for their advantage, if they consented to marry; and especially when the debt for the child had reached a certain amount.

At Tewkesbury, a case was related by Mr. White, the clerk to the magistrates, of a lad of 16 being openly threatened with bridewell, if he refused to marry the woman who had sworn a child to him.

Offence repeated.—At Banbury, the overseer stated that he cautioned a woman, who had been recently delivered of her fourth bastard, against charging the parish in future. Her reply was in these words: "I will not tell you any lies about it, and therefore let you know now that I am not going to be stopped of my fun only to save the parish."

At Kenilworth, Mr. Butler, the overseer, stated that there were several women with three and four bastards, and one with five, who were comfortably circumstanced in consequence, and better provided for than widows or labourers' wives.

At Coventry, a woman in my presence came to affiliate her fourth child by a third man, and was ordered 2s. a week by the directors.

At Old Swinford, a case was mentioned of a woman having seven bastards, having received pay for all and punishment for none.

Punishment seldom enforced.—At Wootton Wawen, a magistrate informed me, that it was very rarely the practice to punish the woman; but that expecting a female to affiliate her seventh bastard at the following petty sessions, he then intended to suggest the propriety of her being punished.

In the great majority of the written replies, it is said that punishment is not inflicted upon the woman.

Mr. Chapple, in speaking of the practice throughout North Devon, states, that "No punishment is ever executed on the mother for the first or any number of offences of this kind."

Parents careless of their Children.—At Bromsgrove, Mr. Oliver Williams, the actuary of the savings bank, stated that it was a common practice for the people to let lodgings to the nailers' apprentices, and to suffer them to sleep in the same rooms with their daughters.

At Wootton Wawen, Mr. Jones, the surgeon, said it was not unusual for him, as an accoucheur, to deliver girls of 15 of bastard children.

At Stow on the Wold, Mr. Blizard, the churchwarden, ascribed the early depravity of females to the neglect of their parents, in consequence of the advantage secured by the present provision for bastard children.

At Buckland the vicar says, the parents now coolly say, "Our children will do so, and we cannot help it."

Moral feeling on the subject weakened.—At Kenilworth, out of 16 women on the books receiving pay for bastards, 11 were married to men not the fathers of the children.

At Worcester, Dr. Streeton stated, that taking some interest in a young female, whom he had delivered of a bastard child, he had attempted, after her recovery, to convince her of the impropriety of her conduct; he said that he was entirely unsuccessful in convincing her she had done what was wrong, and that she merely referred to other cases of females who had done the same.

In the answers received from North Tawton, in the northern division of Devon, Mr. Chapple, who is well acquainted with the whole division, states—"Formerly, a female having a bastard became an outcast of society; now, such a circumstance adds little or no taint to her character."

Consequences which result from the Orders varying with the circumstances of the Father.—At Leamington, the overseer stated that bastardy was a source of decided profit to the woman; that children were usually sworn to gentlemen or their servants, who resided there during the season; that it was difficult to recover the sums due after they had quitted the place, and the parish continued to pay to the woman the sums which had been originally ordered.

It was generally stated by the overseers in different parishes, that men were constantly selected by the women on this account, and they had reason to believe, that no connexion had taken place between the woman and the man fixed upon.

Perjury committed.—At South Molton a child was affiliated by a woman upon the Recorder of the borough: the fact of connexion was disproved by an *alibi* clearly established.

At Thorverton, in Devon, a child was sworn to a person who refused to find sureties, as he denied any connexion with the woman. He was committed to Exeter gaol for three months, and the woman proved never to have been pregnant, but had endeavoured to intimidate the man into marriage.

Bastardy leads to Marriage.—At Bulkington, in Warwickshire, Mr. Warner stated, that he had lately questioned the clergyman of the parish, as to the proportion of pregnant women among the poor whom he married, and his reply was, "not less than 19 out of every 20." Having repeated this statement to the clergyman at Beckenhill, in the same county, he said that it precisely corresponded with his experience in his own parish.

At Nuneaton, the solicitor to the parish, Mr. Greenaway, stated, that his house looked into the church-yard; that he was in the habit purposely of watching the persons resorting to the church for marriage, and that he could confidently say, that 17 out of every 20 of the female poor who went there to be married were far advanced in pregnancy.

That great Losses are sustained by Parishes.—In no place was this less than 50 per cent. upon the debt due from the fathers; in many places between 70 and 80 per cent.; in others, total loss, from death, desertion or transportation, besides the expense of summonses, orders, pursuits, apprehension and committals, which also fall upon the parish.

BASTARDY ACCOUNT.—Buckland.

Number.	Expense.	Recovered from Fathers.	Number.	Expense.	Recovered from Fathers.
1827 - - 11 - - £.85 - - £.9			1830 - - 14 - - £.52 - - £.17		
1828 - - 13 - - 57 - - 11			1831 - - 14 - - 75 - - 26		
1829 - - 13 - - 61 - - 26					

Appendix (A.)

The following is the yearly Bastardy Account extracted from the books of one parish that I visited in Worcestershire.

CASH paid to Bastard Children from March 27 to 28.

Reports.
C. P. Villiers, Esq.

	s.	d.	
Ann Allard	1	9	Received from South, £. 1. 7. 6.
			Cannot pay more on account of his large family.
Bettem -	1	6	The father not found.
Blomer -	1	8	Not found.
Mary Cruck	2	-	The father paid 5l. 16s.
A. Brooks	1	8	The father transported.
M. Hughs	2	6	The man in prison.

	s.	d.	
E. Kite -	2	6	The father paid £.20 and off.
E. Kite -	2	6	The father dead.
S. Price -	1	6	The man in prison 3 months.
Loyd -	2	6	Child blind; father not found.
B. Wasborn	2	-	Father not found.
A. Walford	1	8	Paid £. 3. 18. 8.

Punishment effectual when enforced.

Punishment effectual when enforced.—Mr. Stockford, of Broadway, an opulent farmer, stated, that since he had known the parish, he had never seen a case of punishment of the women for the second offence followed by a repetition of it.

At South Molton, Mr. Tepper, the assistant overseer, stated his conviction that if the magistrates could be persuaded to punish the women, the offence would be greatly checked. He cited two instances which had recently occurred, of his having stopped applications being made; and the women, when threatened with punishment, found means to support their children. He says the usual calculation of women is that the law will not be enforced.

Opinions with respect to a change of the present system.

In canvassing opinions as to the mode of checking this offence, punishment of the woman was repeatedly urged, and it was said, that if the objection against committing a woman to the public gaol was just, some other mode of punishment should be devised; and it is an opinion generally entertained, that if inconvenience or disgrace were associated in the minds of women among the poor with the commission of this offence, their conduct would more nearly resemble that of persons in other classes, who are observed to be subject to such influence. It was the more general opinion, that many of the revolting practices to which parishes resort, would be rendered unnecessary, by making the settlement of the child follow that of the mother, and by not distinguishing the bastard from a legitimate child in any relief afforded to the mother; but it appears to be above all things desirable that the woman should derive no advantage from the man whom she selects as the father, and that since the real father cannot be ascertained but by his own confession (and that the punishment of any man, not ascertained to be the father, must open the road to fraud, and be the means of advantage to the woman), it is by many persons considered advisable,* that she alone, of whose guilt there never can be any doubt, should be responsible for the consequences of an offence which she has always the means of preventing. The equity of punishing only one party where two are in fault may be questioned by some; but this offence cannot really be distinguished from any other where the accomplice is not suffered to escape because the principal is not detected. Punishment is intended for prevention, and to that object every question of change must be referred. All witnesses agree in saying that the women calculate upon impunity, and the cases of seduction of which mention is made are less founded on fact than it is usual to suppose. The importance of this subject is not overrated in the instructions; it is viewed by intelligent people as one deeply affecting the interests of society. The circumstances under which these children are usually placed, and the great increase of their numbers of late years, are considered prominent causes of the juvenile depravity of which so much has been heard, and it is anxiously expected that some mode will be devised of relieving the industrious and moral rate-payers, who are struggling to maintain their legitimate offspring from this unnecessary and increasing charge.

* See Vicar of Buckland's replies.

Relief to the Able-bodied.

Relief to the Able-bodied.—Two rules are usually adopted in awarding relief to the able-bodied labourers in these districts: one is, to distinguish the single from the married man, measuring the necessities of the latter by the number of his family; the other is, to give the relief in money, not, however, to the exclusion of relief in any other shape which may accompany the allowance in money, but, as the more convenient mode, of satisfying fixed and regular claims.

Of the various modes of relieving able-bodied men in money mentioned in the Instructions, there are none with which these counties are not perfectly familiar; they are in full operation in some parishes at present, and have formerly prevailed to a still greater extent.

With the exception of what is termed the Labour-rate and the Roundsman system, peculiar to the agricultural parishes, this observation applies equally to town and country. Relief to men in the employment of individuals is never prohibited, and allowances to men on account of their children is the universal practice.

Money without labour.

Money without Labour.—The practice of granting small sums of money to able-bodied men, without requiring labour in return, is adopted in some parishes in each county; for instance in the Atherstone and Stratford division in Warwickshire, in the Halfshire hundred in Worcestershire, and in the Slaughter hundred of Gloucestershire; and is known to be in use in other parts of these counties. This practice is favoured by parish officers, from a notion that the parish must gain the difference between the cost of the pauper's maintenance, or the minimum allowed by the scale, and what the pauper consents to take; it is also supposed that it may give the pauper an opportunity to seek work for himself, which he could not if he was employed by the parish.

Mancetter.

The scheme appears to be little recommended by the result. In the parish of Mancetter, in the county of Warwick, Mr. Power, the overseer, stated that young able men received 2s. 6d. a week, and the magistrates would not allow the parish to employ them more than three days in the week, in order that they might get work for themselves. Upon inquiry it appeared that their characters soon became so infamous, having devoted their spare time to thieving and poaching, that no person would employ them. In the township of Atherstone, Mr. Wellday, a manufacturer, impatient of contributing his property to the encouragement of vice and idleness by paying men without exacting labour, purchased some water

Mr. Wellday.

water carts himself, for the purpose of giving employment to paupers. The magistrates refused to allow them to be used after 12 o'clock in the day, in order that these men might procure work for themselves: they were also described as becoming the most worthless characters in the town. In the Stratford division, the opposite part of the county, the overseer of Alverston stated that there were young men receiving 2s. 6d. and 3s. a week, and that though it was barely sufficient for their support, and that they lived in lodgings at 6d. a week, yet that they greatly preferred it to more pay with labour, as it afforded them time for depredations of various sorts, from which the farmers each year became great sufferers. At Kidderminster, in Worcestershire, young able men were observed to receive small sums in money, such as 1s. 6d. and 2s., and it was said that the convenient form in which relief was thus afforded them was their chief inducement in seeking it, and that they would not accept it in any other shape. At Stow-on-the-Wold, in Gloucestershire, the overseer and churchwarden stated that this practice had been adopted after the failure of many others, and with great expectation of its advantage, since by it relief was granted without the trouble of finding employment for the pauper, and upon the condition that the application would not be immediately repeated. They stated, however, that it had completely failed, as the same men soon returned, and they were again compelled to relieve them. The object in view is to save trouble and present expense; the result proves a bounty upon idleness and crime, and is in the end not less expensive.

Paupers paid for Work done for the Parish.—When the pauper is wholly employed by the parish in these counties, it is usually on the roads; the married men, in these cases, receive more pay than the single. The influence upon the poor of this mode of relief appears to depend precisely upon the character of the work, or the manner in which it is exacted. If the work is severe, given by the piece, or superintended, and the earnings regulated so as to fall below those of independent labourers working in the same district, a motive completely adequate is afforded to a labourer to seek independent employment; if, however, the pauper is paid by the day, not superintended, it encourages idleness and dependence. The deliberate calculation made by paupers upon this subject was mentioned by every overseer as notorious; the jealousy, also, which is known to exist between the surveyor of roads, who is expected to employ them, and the overseer, is among the obstacles reckoned upon by the poor to provide them with regular work. The time selected by the surveyor for repairing the roads is usually the season which affords employment to the labourers elsewhere; he objects afterwards to receive the men sent to him by the overseer, as adding to the highway-rate, which he is desirous for his own credit with the parish to keep low; he knows, moreover, that the labour of paupers is never worthy of its hire. On this account opinion appeared to be every where in favour, under the present system, of uniting the offices of overseer and surveyor, upon the principle that those whose duty it is to provide food for the poor should also have the means of setting them to work. The parish of St. Peter, Evesham, is an instance of this principle being carried into effect: Dr. Cooper united in himself the offices of guardian and surveyor for 15 years, and has, principally by that means, effected the following reductions in the poor-rates. Prior to his appointment, the rates had been gradually increasing.

Amount of rates for the year ending Lady-day 1812	-	-	£. 547	5	7½
Ditto - - ditto - - 1813	-	-	649	19	1
Ditto - - ditto - - 1814	-	-	797	19	8
Ditto - - ditto - - *1815	-	-	703	6	8
Ditto - - ditto - - 1816	-	-	508	2	2
Ditto - - ditto - - 1817	-	-	456	-	-
Ditto - - ditto - - †1830	-	-	304	1	7

Appendix (A.)
Reports.
C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Alverston.

Kidderminster.

Stow-on-the-Wold.

Paupers paid for work done for the parish.

Effect of.

* Dr. Cooper appointed guardian and surveyor.

† Gradual reduction until the year 1830.

In the year 1800 the amount of the rate was 351*l.* 6*s.* 10*d.*

Population, 1801 - - - 672 - - - Population, 1831 - - - 965

He stated that this had been chiefly accomplished by making it a rule to have a heap of stone close to his own house, with hammers always ready for use for every able applicant for relief; the work was then set at so much a ton, and the wages regulated to fall below those given by farmers in the district around. He soon observed that none but the really indigent applied for the work.

Mr. Spooner, residing near Worcester, mentioned to me the following instance, illustrative of the calculation made by paupers with respect to parish work. A bridge was to be built in his neighbourhood, and it was determined to employ all the able men who applied for relief. While the bridge was building, not a single pauper who was able to work applied to the overseer for relief. A short time afterwards, and when the work was completed, the overseer had frequent applications for relief, and having no work to give the applicants, he was compelled, as usual, to relieve them in money.

Mr. Spooner ‡ confirmed the opinion expressed to me by many different persons, that from the present state of the communication in many parts of the county of Worcester, that if the roads were placed under any general system of superintendence, and properly attended to, assuming that the same number of paupers as at present should remain dependent upon their parishes, that employment for the five next years at least might be found for them, and with the greatest advantage to the county. This fact is worth considering, if an immediate change in the system of maintaining the poor is contemplated.

Mr. James

‡ This gentleman who has long considered, and is extremely anxious to promote, the object of this inquiry, is strongly in favour of relief being only awarded in a shape that should afford a test of the real condition of the applicant.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

The Roundsman system.

Mr. James Stockford, a farmer of great experience in the management of the poor residing near Broadway, on the borders of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, had calculated that the proportion of work done by paupers for the parish on the roads, when paid by the day and not superintended, never exceeded one-third in value of that for which they were paid.

The Roundsman System.—This system is admitted to have been at one time practised very generally in each of these three counties. Great discredit appears to attach to it at present; it is therefore confidently denied in many places to be in use; there is no security, however, against its adoption. The date of its discontinuance was not referred to a later period in many places than the occurrence of the riots in 1830. The season of my visit being in the autumn, prevented its being in practice in many places at that time, but it was expected that it would be resumed in the winter. Upon making inquiry on this subject in Worcestershire, I was in one instance made sensible of the distrust which should be placed in any denial of the abuses connected with the Poor Laws.

While attending a petty sessions, whose jurisdiction extended immediately over 66 parishes, the magistrates afforded me the opportunity of communicating with the overseers who had been assembled there on some public business. A young magistrate, of considerable intelligence, hearing this system repeatedly denied by the overseers with whom I conversed, and anxious that I should be acquainted with the truth, begged to state publicly, upon his own knowledge, that the system did very generally prevail in that county; that he constantly received men sent to him by the overseer, and that he did not refuse to employ them, in consequence of the arrangement made for that purpose in his own parish. This was assented to by one magistrate and denied by nobody. Its object and effects are now too notorious, to render it necessary to detail the mischief it occasions, or the reprobation with which it is mentioned by those who are not interested in its continuance. Its justification was attempted by one farmer alone; he stated that it was unjust to view it as a pure fraud upon the inhabitant of a town, as it had doubtless been devised and suffered to continue, to meet the obvious injustice to the agriculturist of the poor-rate assessment itself, which fixed upon land, merely from its visible quality, the far greater share of the burden of maintaining the poor.

The Labour-rate.

Principle of, as adopted at Cropredy.

The Labour-rate.—The apportionment of labourers on the rate-payers, according to some scale of their contribution to the rate, is a favourite scheme with some persons, especially in those parts of Warwickshire bordering upon Oxfordshire, where it is viewed as a palliative for some of the evils arising out of the present system. I was furnished with a copy of the plan as it has been adopted in Cropredy by Mr. Chamberlayne, in this county, by whom it is said to have been devised. The principle is there stated to be, "that every occupier shall pay labourers' wages in proportion to the rateable value of his land, leaving him the choice to pay it, either to the labourer himself or to the overseer, to whom ultimately the labourer *must apply* for support." These wages are to be determined in amount by the arrangement in the particular parish. At Cropredy they are stated to be 1s. 6d. per day for each man, and 6d. a day for each boy. It is, however, suggested, that "smaller allowances than these will be sufficient to ensure the employment of the labourers settled in a parish, and that the number of persons requiring employment being known, it is easy to adapt the amount of the rate to it." It is further stated in this plan, that "any combination, direct or indirect, among the farmers, to limit the wages of single men or men without families to the amount of their maintenance, is to be deprecated, and that it may be proper to add, that this plan, admirably adapted to agricultural parishes, requires some modification to make it equitable in populous districts, where labour is greatly out of proportion to the demand, and where the *parties assessed have not equal means of furnishing employment.*" The evil therefore which, according to this statement, which contains the plan always referred to in these counties, and from the opinions upon the subject that I collected, it can alone mitigate, is the injustice done to the employers of labour themselves, in the advantage which one party may derive at present from the payment of his labourers out of the rates, while the other is paying the full value of labour from his own funds. It does not profess to relieve those occupiers who have little or no demand for manual labour from the injustice of contributing to the wages of labourers necessarily required by others, nor does it seem calculated to afford general benefit, should it be adopted, throughout the country; for as it provides only for the employment of labourers settled and resident in the parish, it would be followed by a general removal to their own parishes of those labourers who had not acquired settlements where they had procured employment, with all the expense and cruelty incident to that proceeding. I was not moreover able to hear, in any place where it had been adopted, that it had at all weakened the impression that exists now among the labourers, of an obligation, independently of their own character and conduct, imposed upon the property of the country, to provide for their support. The preliminary arrangement of a labour rate, on the contrary, appears, beyond any other system, likely to inculcate as well as confirm this impression. It is urged as an advantage likely to attend it, that it would promote a better cultivation of the land, which in many places is at present neglected. If, however, the ordinary principles which determine the application of capital will not accomplish this, it is a question whether legislation should be resorted to for the purpose. In several parishes I was informed that an arrangement upon some principle of this kind had been made, and afterwards discontinued, from a disagreement among the rate-payers, and unanimity appears essential to the project. In the parish of Napton-on-the-Hill, the only place in Warwickshire where the provisions of the 2 & 3 W. IV. had been acted upon, the Rev. Mr. Bromfield, the clergyman of the parish, spoke with confidence to me of its advantage, and indeed expected to find that it had already been the means of reducing the nominal amount of the poor rate; in this, however, he was disappointed, since the books proved that

Napton-on-the-Hill.

that no reduction had taken place. There were, however, two circumstances that might account for its not operating so unequally upon the inhabitants of this parish as it is said to do in others; one is, that the Grand Junction Canal contributes largely to the rates; the other is, that the tithes are paid under a composition, and the clergyman is also the occupier of land himself.

Allowance System.—The custom of making allowances of money to men, regulated by the number of their families, was seldom, if ever, denied. The exceptions are in some few parishes where, by a better system of management, the labourers have been encouraged to maintain their own children. The system is defended by some persons, and by others it is not considered as a mode of supplying the deficiency in wages from the rates. A magistrate lamented to me, that a practice of paying the wages out of the rates did exist in the southern and eastern counties, and was happy to think that it had never been adopted in his division; but he admitted and defended the custom of allowing a sum for the third or fourth child of every labourer. And indeed in those places where this system has been discontinued, and any advantage is intended to be conferred upon the labourers, a superior claim in the married man over the single is always recognized. If land is allotted to the labourers, a married man is considered to be the first entitled. If prizes are distributed, they are usually for rearing numerous families; where steady employment is to be given, the man with children is preferred; and thus, apparently on the assumption that a fixed number of people are to be maintained out of a certain amount of property, every expedient is resorted to with a view to relieve the parish of its immediate burthen; thus in fact a bounty upon early marriage and population is in constant operation. The difference in parishes in this respect is in the different amounts allowed for the same purposes, and for the maintenance of the same number. In the southern division of Warwickshire, the printed scale allows a man, his wife and three children, 8s. 6d. a week, without work. At Leamington, the neighbouring division, the allowance usually made was 9s. 6d. for the same number. At Stratford, the senior magistrate informed me, that his rule was to order 2s. a head for every member in a family, and he expressed his astonishment that men could live upon so little. In Worcestershire, in some parishes of the Oswaldstow Hundred, 7s. a week is considered sufficient for the same number in family as above stated; at Hanley Castle, in the Pershore Hundred, the allowance only commences with the fourth child, when each labourer, however employed, is considered entitled to the sum of 2s. At Stow-on-the-Wold, regular allowance may begin with the first child: the variations in these counties for the same numbers may be said to be from 7s. to 10s. I was not able to learn that inquiry was ever made into the actual or possible earnings of the women or the children; this, at first, I was hardly able to credit, and in one parish I asked the overseer if it would be possible for a man and his family to be earning a guinea a week, and receiving allowance for his children; he said, "Certainly, as we never suppose that a man earns more than the farmers usually give." Upon asking several other overseers why such inquiry was not made, the reply was generally that they either had not time, or that it was not usual, and that should they refuse to make the allowance applied for, they would be summoned before a magistrate, who would order it. In seeking to learn from these persons the policy of making this distinction between the married and the single men, I was often answered, that if the single men were given as much as the married men, that they would not look out for work for themselves, which they would always find if they looked properly, but that it was otherwise with the married man, since he was unable, from the charge of his family, to go out of his parish, and that he had a fair claim to have work found for him, or to be assisted by the parish to maintain his family without. This statement was often followed by a complaint from the same person of the early marriages of the labourers, and of a notion that prevailed among the poor, that their condition was to be thereby improved; a notion, however, upon the above admissions, not altogether without ground. If idly disposed, the married labourer has more money placed at his command, which he can misapply if he chooses; or if inclined to be industrious, he becomes more certain of regular employment, the preference being always given by the farmers to men with families, from the fear of their becoming chargeable. In either case marriage is presented to the labourer as having advantages independent of its natural object. Many of these persons are however wholly unable to see the connexion between their management and the grievance of which they complain.

The reason alleged for giving the relief in the form of money, is that of convenience and economy: to ascertain the real necessities of the pauper for the purpose of relieving him in any different mode, was said to be incompatible either with the other duties of the overseer, or his own private business; and it is said that the pauper knows best how to spend the money for the advantage of himself and his family. On the policy of giving relief in money, Mr. Boulton, a member of the Political Union at Birmingham, who is well acquainted with the habits of the poor, and has been much concerned in the management of country parishes, and who has sent an able essay on the general subject of the inquiry to the Commission, expressed a strong opinion that it is of the greatest importance that no relief should be given in money, from having observed the inducement which it creates in itself to the poor to seek relief from the parish, and the temptation which it presents to them, when obtained, for its misapplication. He says it is impossible for any one who is not familiar with their habits, to form a notion to what extent this affords encouragement to pauperism. He therefore considers that relief in kind, in or out of the workhouse, as nearly an exclusive rule, to be a necessary step to any improvement of the present system.

The impolicy of giving relief in money is strikingly exhibited in the case of vagrants, whose character, for deliberate and systematic impostors, appears to be better founded than that of any other class of mendicants. Wherever these are relieved in kind, or made to work even for a few hours, their numbers, if they have been great before, immediately diminish,

Allowance system not considered as a mode of supplying the deficiency in wages.

Different amount allowed by different scales.

No inquiry into earnings of family.

Relief in money; reason assigned for giving.

Mr. Boulton of Birmingham.

Vagrants.
(See note to Barnstaple, p. 48.)

Appendix (A.)	diminish, and wherever they are whipped they never appear; they are in communication with each other throughout the country; and the manner in which they are treated in different towns, is posted in the lodging-houses which they frequent: this is the case at Birmingham.
Reports.	<i>Origin of Relief to Able-bodied Men.</i> —In obedience to the Instructions in p. 20, I made inquiry into the origin, in these counties, of the system of applying the parish rates in aid of wages; and I found the period usually referred to was during the years of scarcity towards the close of the last century. In Warwickshire, the year 1797 was mentioned as the date of its commencement in that county, and the scales of relief giving it authority were published in each of these counties previously to the year 1800. It was apprehended by many at that time, that either the wages of labour would rise to a height from which it would be difficult to reduce them when the cause for it had ceased, or that during the high prices the labourers might have to undergo privations to which it would be unsafe to expose them. To meet the emergency of the time, various schemes are said to have been adopted, such as weekly distributions of flour, providing families with clothes, or maintaining entirely a portion of their families, until at length the practice became general, and a right distinctly admitted by the magistrates was claimed by the labourer to parish relief, on the ground of inadequate wages and number in family. I was informed that the consequences of the system were not wholly unforeseen at the time, as affording a probable inducement to early marriages and large families; but at this period there was but little apprehension on that ground. A prevalent opinion, supported by high authority, that population was in itself a source of wealth, precluded all alarm. The demands for the public service were thought to insure a sufficient draught for any surplus people; and it was deemed wise by many persons at this time to present the Poor Laws to the lower classes, as an institution for their advantage, peculiar to this country; and to encourage an opinion among them, that by this means their own share in the property of the kingdom was recognized. To these notions, which were prevalent at that time, must be ascribed the spirit in which the Poor Laws have been administered for 30 years past. The unfortunate circumstance, however, which is to be traced in connexion with the system, is the total change of feeling among the labourers, upon the subject of parish relief. A useful and laudable pride in the dependence on their own exertions, was every where referred to as distinguishing the poor prior to this period. By making their marriages and the numbers of their children the great conditions of relief, by encouraging the opinion that having a family was a service to the state, and by fostering among them the notion that their distresses were natural, and not to be provided for by themselves, the discredit which formerly attached to parish dependence has been removed, and the poor have been taught to believe that they are released from many of the consequences which should properly attach to improvidence and bad character. As illustrating the apprehension entertained by some persons of the results of this system, the Rev. Mr. Broomfield, of Napton, in Warwickshire, stated to me, that he remembered, that in the year 1797, when a meeting was called in that parish, to take into consideration the best means of supporting the labourers during the high prices, and that a regular distribution of flour by the parish, in aid of wages, had been agreed upon, his father, who was then the incumbent of the same living, warned the meeting of the system they were introducing, reminding them of the feeling which then existed among the poor, with regard to being supported by the parish, and the probable result of confounding in their mind all distinction between alms and wages, saying, that if their pride upon the subject was once destroyed, that the Poor Laws would become a most formidable engine directed against the morals and the property of the country; a prediction, the fulfilment of which, Mr. Broomfield lamented to say, he had long since survived. From this change of feeling upon the subject among the poor, a number of consequences are said to have followed; consequences perhaps always inherent in a public system of relief, (as established in this country,) but which had not been fully developed prior to this time. Amongst these are, at first, a constant struggle on the part of the poor to obtain what they now conceive to be their rights, and another equally unceasing effort by the payers of the rate, to escape from the charge, which is constantly attempted either between different rate-payers within the same parish, or between different parishes; and to this constant conflict of interest must be traced a large portion of the present evil and abuse.
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Origin of relief to able-bodied men.	
Date of.	
Consequence.	
Rev. Mr. Broomfield.	
Present evils of Poor Laws predicted in 1797.	
Bad effects of system at their height.	The results of this system in augmenting pauperism had apparently reached their height in these counties in 1819, and the danger with which property was on this account then threatened led to the establishment of some securities against the frauds and the misapplication of the funds which then commonly prevailed. The select vestry, the permanent overseer, and the more general adoption of the provisions of the 22d Geo. III., each affording some protection against the misapplication of the rates, have been chiefly in operation in these counties within this time, and a consequent diminution of the sums raised for the maintenance of the poor has taken place. These securities, however, are for various reasons far from accomplishing their object, and in many places have entirely failed; and in some parishes, where, from increased vigilance on the part of the overseers, some abuses have been prevented, it has been the occasion of great injustice and oppression towards parishes less protected. The effects of the system are, however, becoming daily better understood. They are the subject of general complaint in every district that I visited, and the real question of importance appears to be contained in the following passage of the Instructions, namely, " <i>Whether any or all of these effects have occasioned such a state of things as to have caused any and what difficulty in its discontinuance?</i> " and " <i>By what class of persons, and by what means, its discontinuance is likely to be opposed?</i> " The evidence which these districts afford upon this subject must be considered as satisfactory. Had I been satisfied, however, with the opinion confidently expressed to me by many persons as to the causes and the increase of pauperism, the labours of my inquiry would have been much diminished. This consisted in a belief that pauperism in these counties was only one indication of the great and
Securities provided against.	
Important passage in the Instructions.	

and public distress first occasioned and since continued by the operation of what is termed Mr. Peel's Bill of 1819, which affected the value of the currency. I am alone induced to mention this circumstance from not having examined a single parish in Worcestershire and Warwickshire without this opinion having been expressed, or without the want of employment having been ascribed exclusively by some persons to the insufficiency of the circulating medium. The confident opinion expressed to me by Mr. Attwood at Birmingham, and Mr. Spooner at Worcester, that no check could be provided to the increasing distress of the industrious classes without a further issue of paper currency, was repeated by the farmers, tradespeople, and capitalists of various classes, with whom I had an opportunity of conversing. Their reasoning usually follows this order:—Previously to the passing of this Act capital was abundant, and consequently there was ample employment for labour. This was owing to the facilities of procuring paper money; this facility arose from bankers being desirous of circulating their notes, and being satisfied with the personal security of their customers. After the passing of that Bill, paper was made convertible into gold, and the bankers became less willing to advance money upon the same security; and from this, as it is said, has arisen the difficulty of the farmers to meet their engagements and to effect improvements in their land; and thus, by curtailing expenditure and reducing consumption, the farmer, the labourer, and the shopkeeper are all equally affected, and general distress has ensued. There are some facts, resting upon sufficient authority, which appeared to me to render inquiry into the correctness of these speculations unnecessary; amongst others might be mentioned the public returns of the sums raised for the relief of the poor in these counties, which afford at least a reply to the opinion of the constant influence of the measure in augmenting pauperism. The returns for Warwickshire and Worcestershire were in 1820, 181,984*l.* and 107,260*l.*; and in 1831, 141,578*l.* and 75,862*l.** The fact that the sums expended on the poor have diminished, when taken in connexion with what I have observed above respecting the better management which has obtained within the same time, tends rather to establish the influence which the administration of the Poor Laws has, beyond other circumstances, in determining the amount of pauperism, or of the sums raised for its support.

There are other facts, however, to show that the pauperism of the able-bodied labourers is not induced by any necessity from the present circumstances of these counties, however much that necessity may arise in a bad local application of the law. The first which may be mentioned is, the general rate of wages earned by industrious labourers throughout these districts. In the county of Warwick it exceeds that in Worcestershire and that part of Gloucestershire which I visited. The mal-administration of the Poor Laws is, however, more striking and far more the subject of complaint in the former than in the latter of these counties. In Warwickshire the average rate of wages is from 12*s.* to 15*s.* in the summer, and from 10*s.* to 12*s.* in the winter; 4*s.* a week for women, and 3*s.* a week to boys above 10 years of age. Labourers working by the piece occasionally earn from 18*s.* to 20*s.* a week. In Worcestershire and Gloucestershire the average wages throughout the year may be stated to be 10*s.* a week; † women and children under the age of 14 might earn together 6*s.* a week, not including work by the piece. Having found a disposition to understate the amount of wages, and to overstate the general distress which is said to prevail, I procured from Mr. Handley, of Barford, near Warwick, and well known in that county as an intelligent and experienced farmer, agent and surveyor, the document appended to this Report, ‡ containing extracts from the accounts preserved by some respectable tradespeople and farmers in several parishes of the county, showing the rate of wages and the prices of necessaries during a period of 40 years; by which it will be seen that the wages of labour have risen in value as in amount, and that the condition of the labourer is better at present than it has ever been heretofore.

That these wages are sufficient to enable the labourer to live independently of the parish is proved by the fact, that in nearly every parish that I visited I found that some labourers, who were not settled parishioners, were maintaining themselves and their families without any relief, and in many cases upon wages for the inadequacy of which others were receiving relief. My attention was called to an instance of this in the parish of Barford. William Draper, a labourer, had worked there for 50 years; he was not settled in this parish, or even received relief from his own; he had seven children; he has brought up six sons, who are all living, honest and industrious men; he is now superannuated, and is supported by them: his condition was only that of a day-labourer. On the other hand, Mr. Handley mentioned to me that he had a coal-wharf at Warwick, which is two miles from Barford; he employed a Barford labourer there, at 3*s.* a day, who, after a short time, complained that the distance was too far from his own home, and quitted Mr. Handley's service; about this time his fifth child being born, he applied to his parish for pay for the support of his family; and he has now for upwards of two years been receiving allowances for his children, and working with the farmers, to whom he has been sent by the parish, during the whole of which time he might have been working for Mr. Handley.

Another fact, more striking perhaps than the last, and hardly less frequent to be met with, is that some labourers employed in their own parishes do support themselves independently of the parish, while others not worse off, claim relief.

I made this a constant subject of inquiry, and with very few exceptions instances of this kind were cited in each parish. At Kenilworth several instances were mentioned; § amongst others

* It will occur to some persons to think that these sums do not indicate a diminution in the amount of pauperism, but only an increase in the value of currency; it will be found, however, that the sums expended on the poor were gradually increasing, in the depreciated currency, previously to 1819.

† A low average, if the sums earned at harvest time are included.

§ Labourers bringing up seven and eight children without any relief from the parish.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Man with fifteen children.

Hanley Castle.

Senior magistrate's construction of the 43d of Elizabeth:

Stow.

Rev. Mr. Witt.

Cubbington.

No surplus labourers in county of Warwick.

Bedworth.

Fraud.

Old Stratford.

Relief demanded to carry on trade.

Broadway: pauper keeping pigs.

Stow.

Reason for paupers regretting the death of their children,

others was the case of John Chaplin, who at one time supported 15 children, and has now 11 living, only one of whom, a boy, is able to earn any thing, and has never applied for any relief but on one occasion, when a surgical operation having been performed upon one of his daughters, he was assisted to defray the expense. He bears a high character for honesty and industry; he states that he has never received more than 2s. 6d. per day wages, and has had no other means of living; his cottage is in good order, his children clean and decently dressed. The following, however, is a case of recent occurrence in the same parish: A young man of 20 years of age, in a good situation, married a girl under 18, upon which he quitted his place, and instantly demanded of the parish to provide him with a house. This was refused, but the parish felt itself obliged to procure him another situation, in which he earned 10s. a week. Soon after he again threw himself out of work, and came to the overseer, having said publicly, that "he did not know what the devil was the good of a parish, if a man was not to live upon it." This being known, he was only offered relief in the workhouse, which he refused, and afterwards found work for himself. In the parish of Hanley Castle, in the Pershore hundred of Worcestershire, and in the neighbourhood, having heard much complaint of the magisterial interference, I visited the gentleman who was said to be the senior magistrate of the district, and inquired of him upon what principle he ordered relief to be granted to the able-bodied labourers. He informed me that he considered that every labourer was entitled to claim a certain sum per week for every child born after the third. Upon further asking him if he considered that to be the proper and legitimate construction of the statute of Elizabeth, he stated that he did so entirely, and that he thought that when a man had four children, he might fairly be considered to come within the meaning of the Act as "impotent;" which he further explained by saying, that he considered it impossible for any labouring man to support four children. Having been previously informed of the fact, I inquired of him if he was not aware that a man living in his own parish was at that time maintaining his wife and five children, independently of all relief. He said that he was not aware of any such case, and should think it extraordinary if there was. He then referred to a farmer residing in his parish to ascertain the truth. The farmer assured him that the fact was as I had stated it; that the man referred to was a regular labourer, peculiarly industrious, but that he was not earning more than the average wages of the division, which was considered about 10s. a week for the man, paid by the day, or 12s. or 14s. by the piece. The man was then brought to the magistrate's recollection, and he bore testimony himself to the excellence of his character. At Stow, in Gloucestershire, it is not unusual for labourers to be relieved upon the birth of their first child; and the churchwardens stated, that if they did not relieve them, they instantly threatened to apply to a magistrate. Within a mile of this place, however, is the parish of Upper Slaughter, where, by the care and attention of the Rev. Mr. Witt, the allowance system has been discontinued; and though he states the rate of wages not to exceed from 9s. to 11s. a week, able-bodied labourers maintain their families independently. Hundreds of such cases, as I was informed, might be collected throughout these counties, proving that the means exist for the labourers to maintain their independence, had they an adequate motive for doing so; while in the absence of any uniform protection against fraud and abuse, the following cases can be hardly matter of surprise.

In the parish of Cubbington, in the hundred of Knightlow, county of Warwick, I found an instance of a man who was receiving regularly 5s. a week from the overseer, which he had done throughout the summer, having worked the whole of that time in another parish, his earnings not being known; he had two grown-up daughters living in his house, notoriously prostitutes, whose gains from that source were said to be considerable. The overseer was a respectable woman, who lamented her inability to resist the application, although she knew it to be an imposition. At this place, out of 60 labourers, the number barely necessary for its proper cultivation, 25 men were, only a short time before my visit, sent "on the round," not doing half a day's work, and whose character was deteriorating through idleness. Mr. Handley, who lives in this neighbourhood, says that he is acquainted with many persons occupying land in the northern part of Warwickshire, and that they are constantly writing to him to request him to send them labourers if they can be spared, as they were in sad want of them in that part of the country.* In attending the pay-table at Bedworth, a woman applied in my presence for relief, as being in a starving condition. Before it was granted, she was surprised by the farmer who had hired her at 10d. a day, which she did not deny. In the parish of Old Stratford, a stout man, who had walked from Birmingham, applied in my presence for relief, saying that he could get no work any where, but if the parish would accommodate him with a little money, he thought he could do as a green-grocer, and threatened to bring himself and his mother to live entirely on the parish if it was refused. It had by accident been discovered that this man had a brother having a house and wharf, and several labourers in his employ at Birmingham; the mother, who was in the receipt of 7s. a week from the parish, was also residing there. The overseer stated that it was sometimes better to give money in that way than to suffer them to return and live in the parish. A man here under an order of removal, refused to be conveyed in a gig, and insisted upon receiving the amount of his coach-fare; the overseer not being able to resist his importunities, granted him the money, upon obtaining which he walked. At Broadway, in the county of Worcester, a man under an order from the magistrates, was receiving relief who had two pigs in his sty, and a stock of potatoes. At Stow on the Wold a man regretted publicly the loss of his children on account of his pay from the parish being withdrawn, saying that he should have been well off if they had lived. These cases are

important

* It is also matter of universal complaint, that labourers leave their own parishes during the summer, when they are wanted: these men apply for relief in the winter, without accounting for their previous earnings.

Allowance and roundsman system abolished.

Warwickshire.

Workhouse.

Prizes.

Rents.

* Workhouse established.

† Outstanding law bill paid off.

Contrast with Hilsmorton.

Evidence of Mr. Harris, of Rugby.

Clifton-upon-Dunsmore.

Edgbaston.

Paupers redeemed.

Stratford-upon-Avon rates reduced 50 per cent.: means by which.

important to mention as having just happened during or about the period of my visit, since that circumstance affords some presumption of the prevalence and long standing of the system which admits of their occurrence.

The general influence of this system upon the property of the country, and the character of the labourers, together with the absence of any necessity for its continuance, is well illustrated in the case of those parishes where, by a more intelligent application of the law, the pauperism of the able-bodied has been prevented. A few instances of this kind I was fortunate enough to meet with. In the parish of Rugby, the rates from the year 1814 to 1819, had increased nearly 50 per cent. in each year; payment of wages out of the rates, and other forms of pauperism prevailed, vice and idleness were engendered, and the corruption of the labourers was very general. A workhouse was then established, and all the paupers obtaining orders from the magistrates, against the judgment of the visitor and guardians, were only relieved in the house. Some restraint was imposed upon their liberty, regular work in the manufacture of sacking was exacted, and in lieu of allowances in money according to the number in family, the children of those who were unable to maintain them, were also placed there; some charity funds belonging to the parish were also judiciously distributed in prizes consisting of small sums of 1*l.*, 2*l.*, in no case exceeding 5*l.*, to encourage industry and good conduct, and allotments of land were also offered to some of the most deserving who were willing to pay a full rent for them. By this means all the objectionable modes of distributing relief have been abolished. Rents of cottages which used to amount to 80*l.* a year are reduced to 3*l.* and 4*l.*, and the character of the labourers is totally altered, they are now industrious, contented and well-conducted. The operation of the system upon the rate is marked by the following Returns:

Poor Rate in—

		£.	s.	d.			£.	s.	d.
1816	- amounted to -	431	13	6	1824	- amounted to -	583	10	-
1817	- - - - -	754	11	-	1825	- - - - -	484	10	-
1818	- - - - -	1,069	1	-	1826	- - - - -	546	4	-
1819	- - - - -	1,290	13	-	1827	- - - - -	603	18	-
*1820	- - - - -	874	2	-	1828	- - - - -	379	10	-
1821	- - - - -	892	19	-	1829	- - - - -	402	10	-
1822	- - - - -	810	12	-	1832	- - - - -	343	8	11
1823	- - - - -	665	12	-					

Annual value, £.5,275 - Number of Acres, 1526 - Population, 1,805. 1811. 1831. 2,501.

A striking contrast with this case is presented in that of Hilsmorton,† the parish immediately adjoining, which is now in the condition in which Rugby formerly was. The practice of paying wages out of the rates is there adopted in every form. The rates are gradually increasing, and Mr. Harris, an intelligent solicitor resident at Rugby, who takes a most active and kind interest in promoting the welfare of the poor, and who is well acquainted with this parish, expresses his satisfaction at its not being more populous, as from the discontent and misery that prevailed among the labourers, riots and outrages might at any time be expected.

Mr. Harris, who has watched and promoted the redemption of the parish of Rugby, is persuaded that it is quite possible to reform any parish by similar means; and he is the more confident in his opinion from the reason that he has had by experience to think well of the disposition of the poor themselves, who, he believes, with slight encouragement to habits of prudence and economy, would be ready and eager to abandon their reliance on the parish. For this purpose he simply recommends, that relief should not be given capriciously, and at the discretion of irresponsible people, but upon some uniform system, making it always less preferable to the poor than their own independent maintenance.

In the parish of Clifton-upon-Dunsmore the allowance system has been abolished by adopting the Rugby plan with regard to the workhouse, and in distinguishing the labourers who maintain themselves independently by a gift of small prizes at the end of the year. It was commenced in 1816, when the rates amounted to 575*l.* and by this means they have been reduced to 260*l.* 3*s.*, and the vicar says, "the character of the labourers has certainly been improved since the alteration; they are more industrious, sober and orderly."

In the parish of Edgbaston Dr. Johnstone, a few years since, established an adult school, with the view, by teaching the labourers to read, of affording them a rational occupation, and diverting them from mere sensual indulgence; and took upon himself the trouble of reasoning with them upon the value of their own independence. The good judgment which he displayed in attempting this object has enabled him to succeed, and nearly 80 adult persons are now subscribers to a room which he has provided for them, and where they are engaged during their leisure moments in reading. Not one of these men now ever apply to the overseer for relief, though many amongst them were formerly paupers and notorious drunkards. There has been no increased demand for labour in this parish, or any rise in wages, otherwise to account for it; but they do now maintain themselves, and subscribe to the reading room instead of the alehouse. In the borough of Stratford-upon-Avon, while the population has been gradually increasing, the rates have been reduced 50 per cent. in the course of 10 years, simply by the vigilance and the greater care of a select vestry and an assistant overseer, no case being relieved without a strict investigation into its particular

† The following Returns have been made of the Poor Rate for these years:

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1826	-	-	-	390	17	-	
1827	-	-	-	487	-	-	
				1828	-	-	-
				1829	-	-	-
					687	16	-
					792	17	-

Appendix (A.)

particular merits. The following are the Returns previous to and subsequent to their appointment:

Reports.	Year ending Lady-day 1816	£. 1,031	-	-	Year ending Lady-day 1823	£. 1,155	17	1
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	1817	- 1,393	4	-	1824	- 1,043	8	2
	1818	- 1,499	-	-	1825	- 1,026	14	6
	1819	- 1,682	6	-	1826	- 1,035	11	6
	1820	- 1,829	2	8	1827	- 1,000	7	10
	1821	- 1,647	3	7	1828	- 1,046	4	-
	1822	- 1,420	17	9	1829	- 911	19	2

Worcestershire.

Gloucestershire.

Labourers' evidence.

This borough is situated in a division where there were riots and fires, and the labourers are much demoralized, and the mode in which the Poor Laws are administered is notoriously bad; not a man, however, was suspected to be concerned in these outrages who belonged to this place. At Coughton, in Worcestershire, the allowance system had been abolished by the intervention of Sir J. Throckmorton, who offered allotments of land from a quarter to half an acre each, at a moderate rent, to the efficient labourers. The rates had been reduced in the course of 18 months 2-5ths; and several striking instances were mentioned of men ceasing to be idle and drunken, who were before dependent and of notorious bad character. At Walford, in Gloucestershire, William Welch, the assistant overseer, states in writing, that within a few years past he has observed a great change in the habits and character of the labouring people, which he ascribes entirely to the establishment of a workhouse, by means of which, in offering relief to the labourers in that form, he has been able to check their applications to the magistrates, and abolish the roundsman and allowance system. After observing many instances of an almost necessary connexion between the condition of the people and the mode of administering relief by the parish, I examined persons of different classes with regard to the interests which might be supposed to be involved in the continuance of the present system in the agricultural districts; and on this point the following evidence of some labourers themselves, who were wholly unprepared, and unacquainted with the object of my inquiry, is not unimportant. They were examined in the presence of two gentlemen, one a proprietor, and the other an occupier of land in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

1. *T. B.*, labourer, stated, That he was not settled in the parish in which he worked; that he was upwards of 50 years of age, and that neither he nor his father had ever received relief from any parish; that he knew many labourers were getting pay from the parish, and that many were relieved who were not so badly off as others who would not demand it; but that people did not care to go to the parish now as they used when he was a young man. Upon being asked his opinion of the roundsman system, he answered in the following manner: "That is the very worst thing that has ever happened for the labourers of this country; that is the way our wages are kept down. A farmer wants to get some work done; he proposes starving wages to the labourer; if the labourer refuses to take them, the farmer says, 'Very well, I do not want you,' and sends to the overseer and gets a man, whom he pays what he likes, and then the parson and the shopkeeper are made to pay the rest. And if a man is not in his own parish, he will often take less than he can live upon, sooner than be sent back to his own parish where he is not wanted." Upon being asked how he came to have been always employed, and (as he had previously said) earning sometimes 14s. a week, he said, "That all farmers were not alike, and that some farmers knew the value of a labourer who was honest and hard-working, and that his character might be learnt of any farmer with whom he had ever worked;" but he added, "This is not always the case, for I have seen many a man employed, not because he has a good character, but because he has a large family; and there are many who know that to be the case."

2. *J. S.*, aged 50, was a married man; had no children at present; he was a tenant of half an acre of land; he stated that it never took him from his other work, as if he had much to do, he got some single man to work for him, as there were always some unemployed; the farmers always preferring to employ the men with large families, to keep them off the parish. One of the gentlemen present asked this man whether he would not prefer to see a man get employment who had children to support, than a single man who had only himself to provide for; his answer was in these words: "To speak openly, sir, I consider that a man ought to be paid for his work, and not for his family; and that if I had done a good day's work I should sooner have the value of it myself than see another man paid because he has got children." He was then asked if he had heard of men marrying with the view to obtain regular employment from the farmers, or more relief from the parish: he said, "There are many, Sir, who do think that they shall be better off if they have a family, and I have heard them often say so." He was asked if the labourers thought that the more industrious they were, the more encouragement they would receive: "No, they do not do that, because we see many a man get parish pay whether he is industrious or not." He continued, "But, Sir, what is the use of a man working hard if he has got no master to oblige, paid half by the parish and half by the farmer? How would a man be better off if he were to work ever so hard? it would be better for us to be slaves at once than to work under such a system." I asked him if some of the labourers did not prefer the system as a means of being idle, or of only doing half a day's work; he said he believed that might be the case sometimes, and added, "Where is the wonder; when a man has his spirit broken, what is he good for?"

3. *G.*, labourer, stated that he was 70 years of age: he had brought up a family of six children, and had never applied to the parish, but on one occasion, to assist him to pay his rent in time; he knew many a man who was receiving parish relief, not so badly off as he had been himself, but that there were so many now with large families, that he hardly thought they could keep off the parish; "but," he added, "what is a man to do, Sir; for if he has not a family he has a bad chance of getting steady work in his own parish."

4. *C. J.*,

4. C. J., labourer. He had four children; he had never received parish relief; on being asked what he thought of the roundsman system, he said, "it completely ruined the labourer," and added, "and people may say, Sir, what they like, but there are one set of farmers who always will keep it up as long as they are allowed to do so; and it is no use their saying they do not approve of it, when last week farmer — turned off all his men, and in the same week took the same men all back from the parish, and now he pays them half the wages that he did."

5. C., labourer, said that he lived with his father-in-law, who was a very old man, that he often heard him remark "what a sad change there was now in men going on the parish, and that he remembered the time when a man would rather starve than apply; but that now-a-days, a man was more employed because he went on the parish than because he was industrious and strived to keep off."

On another occasion, the gentleman at whose house I was stopping, being doubtful of the encouragement offered to early marriage from the mode of administering the Poor Laws, proposed to obtain, if possible, the opinion of the first labourers to be met with in the fields; an opportunity soon occurred: four men were working together near a farm-house; upon questioning them as to the wages they were earning, one among them, who informed us that he was 30 years of age and unmarried, complained much of the lowness of his wages, and added, without a question on the subject being put to him, "That if he was a married man, and had a parcel of children, he should be better off, as he should either have work given him by the piece, or receive allowances for his children." He was immediately joined by two of the other men, who said, "Yes, Sir, that is how it is; a man has no chance now unless he is a family man." The other, an old man, who was nearly 80 years of age, said, "That he was yet able and willing to work, but that he was obliged to go upon the parish because the farmers gave all the work they could to men who had families. When he was young, there was no such thing as that." The men proceeded to reckon what was allowed to families according to their numbers; and they spoke of the system with great irritation. This is chiefly worth mentioning, as showing the feeling which probably prevails amongst the poor when not immediately benefiting themselves by the system; and that it tends in no degree to make the class happy and contented may be inferred, from this part of the country having been the scene of considerable riot and outrage in 1831. I examined several farmers as to the interests which they considered themselves to have in the continuance of the system of paying wages out of the rates. Many stated that they would greatly prefer it being discontinued, but that now they felt it as a hardship that one farmer in a parish should get his wages paid in this manner out of the rates, while others were paying labourers their full wages and paying the poor-rate too, and that there was great difficulty sometimes in getting all the farmers to agree to abolish it. Upon making inquiry of an intelligent farmer, a tenant of Mr. ———, he stated to me his own case. He had been much annoyed by the roundsmen which had been sent to him, owing to their depredations and the badness of their work, observing also the bad effect which the system had upon the conduct of the people; he attempted to persuade the other farmers to unite in abolishing it. In this, however, he did not succeed, notwithstanding that upon a comparison of the number of labourers which the land required with the number then resident in the parish, they rather required more, than suffered from any redundancy. He then reckoned the real value of a roundsman's work, and determined himself only to employ men whom he paid according to the work they did, and to refuse to employ any roundsman. He said that he was aware that he was thus paying more wages than other farmers in the parish, and that in the rates he paid, he was also contributing to pay their wages. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, he assured me that he had been the gainer; his property was more secure, his work far better done, and much time was saved. Mr. Chapman, of Stoneleigh, and Mr. Whateley, of Welsbourne, persons well known in the county of Warwick as practical farmers and land surveyors, each stated their conviction that the farmers derived no real advantage from the system, for that a pauper was never worthy of his hire. Mr. Lakin, a farmer himself, and agent to Lord Beauchamp, in the county of Worcester, fully confirmed this opinion, and he afforded me the opportunity of meeting several other farmers from different parishes at his house, who each of them considered that the bad feeling which had taken place of late years between the farmers and the labourers, and the very altered character of the latter, was entirely owing to the manner in which the Poor Laws had been administered. They stated that they occupied lands which their fathers held before them, and opportunities were constantly afforded to them of contrasting the different manner with which the present labourers and those who preceded them felt towards their masters' property; they remembered the time when the labourers almost identified themselves with the farmers' property. It was difficult now to induce them to move one step to protect it. These gentlemen ascribed this change of feeling entirely to the mischievous interference which was constantly taking place in the contract between master and servant. They considered that the competition ought to be free on each side, enabling the master to choose the labourer, and the labourer to serve the master that suited him best; but that under the present law of settlement, and subject to the interference of the magistrates, they considered that this was impossible; that they employed men now whom they knew to be bad, and the men were bad from the knowledge that they must be employed. Mr. W. Crowther, a gentleman to whom I was referred generally, as better acquainted with the real interests of the farmer and the labourer than any person with whom I could communicate in either of the three counties, has stated the following facts in writing. He resides in the parish of Aston Somerville, in the county of Gloucester, where he has acted as overseer for 26 successive years. He occupies the third of the parish of Temple Grafton, in the county of Warwick, and about a fourth of the large parish of Stone, in the county of Worcester. He says, "I make no difference between the single and the married labourers, but pay them all

Further evidence of labourers.

Farmers' evidence respecting their interest in the payment of wages out of the rates.

Case.

Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Whateley,
Warwickshire.
Mr. Lakin, Worces-
tershire.

Mr. W. Crowther,
Gloucestershire.

His mode of paying labourers.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Effects of.

Provident Societies.

Kenilworth.

Evidence of
Actuaries of
Savings Banks.Mr. Pole, Bank Di-
rector.

according to the value of their labour." In answer to the question as to the amount of the annual earnings of a labourer, his wife, and two children aged 14 and 11, he says, "The earnings of the man with me are 36*l.* 8*s.*; of the women and children, 22*l.* 15*s.*" He adds, "They can live well upon their earnings, and I know that some of my labourers, with five or six children, save money, and if I had treble the number of labourers I should find work for them at that rate." "Relief is never given according to any scale, nor is the practice of paying labourers out of the rates ever adopted; but I believe it to be so in the neighbouring parishes. All my labourers are industrious good workmen, and maintain their large families by their labour alone." When there were riots in the neighbourhood, between 90 and 100 came to me and offered to protect my property. These facts are certainly important as demonstrating the connexion between the parish system and the demoralization of the people, and also showing the prospects of the labourers generally if that system should be abolished. This gentleman is a practical farmer, and he views it as no less his own interest than that of the labourers, that they should in no way depend upon the parish for support. He therefore pays every man, woman or child that he employs according to the value of their labour, without reference to any other circumstance, and as a farmer he finds that he can afford to pay them such wages as will enable them to maintain themselves and save. Under this system he observes that they acquire economical habits; he bears testimony to their good moral character,* and he finds them ready to defend property whenever it is attacked. The labourers in his neighbourhood are, on the other hand, paid their wages out of the rates, and their character is manifested by rioting and outrage; but that their pauperism results rather from the operation of the Poor Laws than from real distress, may be inferred from the fact that this gentleman does not profess to pay a rate of wages that would interfere with his profits, or for the purpose of charity; and states that he could find employment for *treble* the number, were they to apply to him.

This statement of Mr. Crowther† shows, moreover, that when the poor are not degraded by the Poor Laws, that they are well-disposed to rely upon their own exertions; and indeed there is much evidence to show that, if properly encouraged, there is a natural disposition among them to make a provision for themselves. This is now strongly marked by the success which has attended the attempts which the clergy and gentry have lately made in their different parishes to establish provident societies for their use. The principle of these has usually been, to secure to the poor some benefit in the shape of clothing or other necessities, after a regular contribution for a given time of a small portion of their earnings. No instance was mentioned of their having failed, and the eagerness which some of the poor were said to display in belonging to them had far exceeded the expectation of the persons by whom they were established. The chief obstacle to their success and more general extension was said to be in the parish system of maintaining the poor, by which the idle and worthless were for ever being placed in a condition equal, if not superior, to that of the provident and industrious. The inclination of the poor towards establishments of this kind is also shown by the number of their own voluntary societies which exist under the name of friendly benefit or provident societies. They are for the most part formed upon a principle of mutual assurance against sickness or old age. But some having failed in their original purpose, are still supported by contributions from the labouring classes, with a view to an ultimate division of the fund. The miscalculations of these societies are now notorious, and they are not mentioned here to show that the labourers do make any effectual provision for themselves, but simply that they are familiar with the practice of saving their earnings, with a view to some ulterior benefit. At Kenilworth, where the population is about 3,000, there are not less than seven or eight benefit societies, some entirely supported by agricultural labourers, others by mechanics; one person informed me that he belonged to a friendly society, from which he should receive, by paying 1*s.* a month, 8*s.* a week during sickness; that he also contributed to what are termed weekly gatherings, from which fund, under the same circumstances, he would receive 7*s.* a week, making together 15*s.* a week, and that this allowance would be paid for six months during sickness, afterwards he would receive one-half as long as he continued ill. This man stated that out of 300 of his own class, nearly 150 were contributors, and that the others had also the means if they chose to subscribe. At Bedworth there is a society of this kind, supported entirely by women, consisting of weavers and domestic servants, and the wives of labourers, of which the fund at present amounts to 4,000*l.* and is vested in a savings bank. Independently of these societies, whose funds are generally deposited in the savings banks, in each town that I visited where these banks were established the actuary stated from his knowledge that a considerable proportion of the agricultural labourers were contributors, and in some instances I was furnished with the precise number. At Stow, in Gloucestershire, the savings bank is chiefly under the superintendence of Mr. Pole, the bank director, who resides in this neighbourhood, and he considers that by the securities which he has established for the purpose, that all chance of fraud in persons placing their money under fictitious names for the sake of the interest is precluded. He states, on his own knowledge, that there are many agricultural labourers who contrive to make deposits out of their earnings, though the average rate of wages in this district cannot be said to exceed 10*s.* a week for the whole year. In the parishes in the neighbourhood of Tewkesbury the labourers are not generally pauperized, though the rates are very high in that town. There the following return was made to me by the actuary:—

1829.	Labourers	- - - -	48	Tradesmen	- - - -	111
1830.	Ditto	- - - -	52	Ditto	- - - -	96
1831.	Ditto	- - - -	80	Ditto	- - - -	69

* He also mentions that there have only been two bastards here in five years.

† Mr. C. gives all the work that he is able by the piece.

It appeared to be the general opinion, however, that, under the influence of the parochial system, contributions of this kind must diminish. Upon examining Mr. Williams, the actuary of the savings bank at Banbury, upon this point, he stated that the deposits of labourers in that bank had certainly diminished of late years, and added, that it was a matter of no surprise to him that they should, since the farmers were in the habit of applying to him to know the names of the labourers who had made deposits, in order that they might avoid employing them, as men not likely to seek parish relief! In 1829 they amounted to 179; in 1830 to 160.

Farmers avoid employing labourers who deposit in Savings Banks.

Beer shops, large number of.

Attractions of.

Bad effects, cause of.

Remedy for.

Capital.

Importance of inquiry to agricultural interest.

Prospects of that interest.

* See Statistical Table, App. No. 2.

Mode of affording it relief.

Peculiar burthens upon the land.

1. Poor-rate.

2. County-rate.

When it is considered that this is the system in operation throughout a large portion of the kingdom, it is hardly just to assume that the poor have no disposition to save their earnings because they either misapply them at present, or are not distinguished for habits of prudence; indeed it would be far more just to look to the operation of such a system, than to the bad propensities of the poor themselves, to account for a fact indicative of their improvidence, which is observable in every village, namely, the great disproportion in number of the beer-shops to other shops dealing in articles of ordinary or necessary consumption. Wherever there is a single butcher, baker, or grocer, there may be found a double number of shops selling beer in retail. That a beer-shop offers allurements besides that of the article in which it professes to deal, is notorious; and in some places I was informed that deliberate arrangements are made for this purpose, in procuring prostitutes or music to attract custom in villages in the neighbourhood of towns, but I could hear no reason for believing that the attraction would be found too great for the labourers to resist, had they an adequate motive for a better application of their earnings. That the sudden removal of all effective control over public-houses has been productive of great injury to the labourers and their families it is impossible to doubt; but the evil has arisen from a great temptation being suddenly presented to a people without education, and living under the most demoralizing circumstances possible. The abuse in the licensing system, which led to a change in the law, arose from unfit persons being placed in the commission of the peace; the proper remedy for which was obvious; and the remedy for the evil at present seems rather to be, that these houses should be placed under the control of persons properly qualified, and instruction afforded to the people, as well as encouragement to their prudential habits, than that any attempt should be made to suppress them or limit their number by legislative means. The large amount of wages which are spent in these houses is, however, another indication of the capabilities of the labourers to maintain themselves independently, if their earnings were properly applied. It is, however, useless to adduce further evidence upon this point.

The general result of my inquiries in the rural districts of these counties is, that there is no redundancy of able and willing labourers, that the means for their employment exist, and that if the present operation of the Poor Laws did not prevent the legitimate contract between employer and labourer, that the latter would have ample means of maintaining himself, independently of all public support.

It is, however, no argument against the pressing necessity of altering the mode of maintaining the poor, that the agricultural capital of these counties, and more especially of Warwickshire and Worcestershire, has not yet been generally diminished by the increasing burthen of the poor-rate: for the results of this inquiry could at no time have been of greater importance to the agricultural interest, both as regards its present condition and its prospects.

This interest has, without doubt, deteriorated, and its deterioration is likely to continue. Though agricultural capital has not diminished, it has not increased; but profits have greatly fallen, and the causes for their decline are still in operation. The increased demand for agricultural produce by an increasing population has long since rendered a resort to other soils besides those of England a matter of necessity, and the English producer is exposed to a double disadvantage in having to compete with soils less exhausted than his own, and with fewer burthens to bear; prohibitive duties are imposed to protect the agriculturist from the produce of the continent, but the same protection is not afforded with regard to Ireland, and that country is now the great source of agricultural depression; the population, however, of this country will continue to increase; the necessity for further importation will each year become more imperative, and agriculture consequently more depressed; and though the positive wealth of this country may be increased by this circumstance,* since what is lost by agriculture will be more than recovered by commerce, manufacture and the general consumer, yet it is highly important, if possible, to prevent a sudden destruction of capital, and to preserve the labouring population from any unnecessary hardships. Whatever, therefore, tends to relieve the land of exclusive burthens, which now increase the cost of production, will also facilitate the competition with the foreign producer, and enable the present generation of labourers to find a market in this country for their labour.

The following are the burthens which were frequently represented to me as pressing with unequal severity upon the agricultural interest:—

First and principally is the rate for the maintenance of the poor. The principle of the assessment is that it should be fixed upon the land, because, according to the law, it is visible property; but the charge is not less unjust or oppressive to the proprietor of land than it would be if borne exclusively, or in undue proportion, by any other proprietor.

2d. The rate levied for the general purposes of the county, assessed upon the same description of property. These include public proceedings at law, building and maintaining gaols, and other charges incident to the execution of the law, building and repairing bridges, jurors' bills, lunatic, and all other public Returns.

Warwickshire and Worcestershire are counties which very strongly illustrate the unequal operation of this rate upon land. More than half of the offences that are tried at Warwick have arisen in Birmingham. The justices for the county are the only authorities having any criminal jurisdiction in that district, containing a population of nearly 200,000 persons. The

Appendix (A.)	county at large is therefore charged with the expense of committing, conveying and maintaining prisoners, to take their trial at the assize or session; the county gaol being at a distance of 35 miles from Birmingham. Upon an average taken of five years, the county rate was 1s. in the pound upon the value of 1815.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	At Worcester, out of a calendar of 300 prisoners annually tried, scarcely 10 per cent. are committed from the rural districts, the rest coming chiefly from Dudley, and other manufacturing districts.
	The increase of crime, as well as the enormous expense of building and repairing bridges, has added 50 per cent. to the rate in each of these counties within ten years; this I found a subject of universal complaint.
3. Statute duty.	3d. <i>The statute duty</i> done upon the turnpike roads, or the composition paid for it. There is an inconvenience in this peculiarly felt by the farmers; their teams are used on this duty at a time when they may be most required by themselves, and they are not even relieved from the tolls when they send their produce to market.
4. Land tax.	4th. <i>The land tax.</i>
5. Tithes.	5th. <i>Tithes.</i> —This tax, like the preceding one, is not open to the charge of injustice, as regards individuals, since they are both of too ancient a date for any complaint that property is not held subject to the condition, but they both operate at present disadvantageously to the land, since any charges of this kind tend to increase the cost of production; * and the operation of tithe in preventing improvements is well known.
Justice of relieving the land.	If it were possible to relieve the landed interest by extending these charges more equally over all other property, it would prove highly beneficial to counties circumstanced like Worcestershire and Warwickshire. They have certainly been spared some of the extreme consequences of the mal-administration of the Poor Laws which have occurred in the southern and eastern parts of the country by the draught which their manufactures have afforded to the surplus people, but upon any failure in trade, the rural parishes are threatened with a return to their settlements of unemployed persons, whose recent occupation render them wholly unfit for agricultural service, and the congregation of masses of people, as in the manufacturing districts, by its tendency to promote vice and crime, adds considerably to the rate upon the county. It would be, moreover, but just that timely relief should be extended to the agricultural portion of this country, when it is remembered that the manufacturing and commercial interests are those which more especially call for the further importation of foreign grain, which, however it may be for the general interest of the country, must inevitably affect the interests connected with the land.
	MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS.
Principal districts of this character.	I SHALL report separately the results of my inquiries in some of the principal of these districts. The working population in them is placed under very different circumstances from that in the agricultural districts, and from the fluctuating character of manufacturing employment, and the alternation of high and low wages to which the workpeople are exposed, the Poor Laws appear to have a wider field for their influence. It is not unimportant, moreover, to ascertain with what judgment and economy the parish funds are applied in these districts, since the amount of their poor rates are often quoted in and out of Parliament as indicative of the general condition of the country, or of particular interests, and perhaps more value has been attached to this argument than it really deserves.—I have referred to these places in the order in which I visited them.
Coventry.	<i>Coventry.</i> —At Coventry the parishes of St. Michael and the Holy Trinity are united for the management of the poor under a private Act. There is a house of industry, subject to the provisions of this Act, an extensive establishment, containing at present 334 inmates, viz. men 108, women 105, boys 66, girls 55. The house is under the immediate management of a governor and matron, subject to the control of a board of 18 directors; it is kept with peculiar cleanliness and order, the provisions are of the best kind, and the inmates well clothed and lodged. The young and able-bodied persons are employed either at corn or silk mills, and in the labour of the house. No difference is made in the quantity or quality of food, according to the nature or amount of the labour, and a certain per centage upon their work is allowed to the paupers themselves. The director who conducted me through it appeared to have some pride in displaying its comforts; he assured me that his object was to render it “a comfortable asylum for the poor, and not, as some directors might wish, to make it a bug-bear, to deter them from seeking relief.” He enabled me, also, to witness his indulgence to some of the inmates applying for leave of absence from the house to visit the town. He afterwards produced a book, in which he said it was customary for visitors to state their opinion as to the character of the establishment; I observed a number of testimonials recorded of its extreme comfort, and, at his request, added my own acknowledgment that his wish in that respect had been fulfilled. The following day I attended at the house, for the purpose of meeting the board of directors. I first saw the out-poor paid in small sums already parcelled out in silver and copper; women came for their husbands and relations, and young men for themselves, the proportion appearing greater of the young and middle-aged than the old and infirm. The claims had already been decided upon; the person, however, who was paying the money asked one woman if the whole allowance was for herself? she replied, with some impatience, “I should think so, indeed; don’t you know that I have three children?” Another case was that of a young man, who was asked what proof he had given
Local Act.	
House of Industry.	
Inmates’ employment.	
Fare.	
Board day.	
Distribution of relief.	
Cases.	

* The overseer of Martinhoe, (N. Devon) who is a farmer, offered to prove that a portion of the land was precisely kept out of cultivation by the tithe, and, if cultivated, would afford employment to every able-bodied pauper maintained by the parish.

given that he was unable to get work; he stated, "that the shoemaker with whom he had worked had promised to certify that he only could give him employment for half a week." I observed that arrangements had been made for paying the poor with the greatest expedition; I was informed that the reason of this was to enable them to return the sooner to their own employments in the town. I attended in the room where the directors were assembled: six were present; the quorum is seven. Some cases were then heard; the first was that of three children, who had just been deserted by the father, who had quitted the town; this was admitted to be a common event, and it was stated that it was seldom that parishes were not put to more expense in pursuing and punishing the offender than in submitting to the maintenance of their children; in this case they were ordered to be placed in the house. The next case was that of a woman applying for an allowance for her fourth bastard by a third man, two of whom were men with families; the third had left the town. In neither of these cases had she been punished, and a weekly allowance was ordered to her on this occasion. The next case was a father and son, whose characters were so notoriously bad, that they could get no employment in the town. The son was 19 years of age; one of the directors stated that he had flogged him himself in the morning: he was placed in the house; the father was relieved and sent away: it was now considered that no further cases could be gone into, on account of the absence of the seventh director. A discussion then took place on the success of an expedient which had been lately devised for preventing able men applying for relief without doing work in return. This was in compelling them to work at a mill for grinding corn in the house for a certain number of hours in the day. The governor stated that the same men had repeated their applications. I asked the amount of wages paid to them; I was told 2s. a day! The clerk to the directors then read a letter that he had received from Birmingham from a man who had his settlement in Coventry, requesting that his allowance, which he was receiving weekly, should be raised, and added, "If this is not granted, I shall be obliged to bring my wife and four children, and spend the winter with you at Coventry." It seemed to be considered as the better economy to raise the allowance. I requested then to see the books. The following amounts of annual expenditure were shown to me:—

For the year ending Easter 1828	-	-	-	-	£. 12,944
Ditto - - ditto - - 1829	-	-	-	-	13,780
Ditto - - ditto - - 1830	-	-	-	-	23,128
Ditto - - ditto - - 1832	-	-	-	-	17,615

I inquired the occasion of the great increase in the expenditure for the year 1830, expecting to learn that the trade had been peculiarly depressed; I was informed, however, that this was not the cause, that the fact had already been the subject of inquiry, and that it was not occasioned by any embezzlement on the part of the officers of the house. Upon asking if it was surmised in what way this money had been spent, one director, in the presence of the rest, stated that in truth nobody could doubt that it had been spent in contemplation of a general election, which occurred during that year. From the large discretion which was allowed in the distribution of relief, it was impossible to bring home to any person a direct charge of misapplication, but it was notorious in the town that no other circumstance existed to account for it, and it was generally believed that relief had been distributed with that object. The trade during the last year had been far worse, when the expenditure appears to have been less by nearly 6,000*l*.

Relief granted with a view to general election.

The directors have since my visit sent written replies to the Queries, and in describing the system upon which relief is granted, state, "that out-door relief is only given where men have large families, and their wages appear to be inadequate, and that it is given according to a scale, which is seldom exceeded, and as much less allowed as the paupers *can be persuaded to accept*." (I observed the scale referred to, it was printed and framed, and placed in a conspicuous part of the board-room; it appeared to be regulated by the price of bread, and to be somewhat higher than that allowed by the justices for the county.)

Directors' replies.

The manufacturers hire the labour of the able people in the house, for which they pay 1s. a head per week; upwards of 60 persons are so employed.

The following extract is from the bastardy account:—

	Number.	Paid to Women.	Received.
1828 - - -	146	£. 700	£. 308 16 -
1829 - - -	150	710	305 5 6
1830 - - -	143	688	192 13 6
1831 - - -	133	728	353 19 -
1832 - - -	148	770	222 19 6

Bastardy.

There has been an increase of nearly 6,000 in the population since the last census of 1821. The amount of the poor-rates in Coventry were given in evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons on the Silk Trade, to prove the distress of the city occasioned by free trade.

I have selected some passages from the examination of the person who submitted this statement to the Committee, which appear to bear upon the subject of inquiry.

The witness is a weaver, who represents the distress as being peculiarly great.

It appears that the poor-rates for the year ending April 1830 in Coventry were much higher than at present: how do you account for this?—I gave myself the trouble to inquire how it occurred, and I went to a director, who was in office in 1829; the explanation he gave me was this, that at that time they had what was denominated a very *liberal* board, and they distributed the rates more liberal than usual, and at the close of the year they found themselves in debt 3,000*l*.

Passages from the evidence of a weaver respecting the poor-rates and the rate of wages.

Have the number of poor increased of late?—They have considerably increased.

Do you know that the casual poor have increased much?—Yes, very much indeed.

Do the working classes, particularly the ribbon weavers, contribute to the poor's-rates?—

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Of late years they have not; the greater part do not at the present time, and have not for some time past.

Can you state the amount per pound of the poor-rate in the years for which you have given the returns?—I am not aware of the assessment; I do not know how the directors manage it; I only know what is collected and expended, and that a vast number who formerly contributed to the rate are unable to do so now.

What is the general rate of wages at Coventry at present?—In the plain branches, from 9s. to 12s. 6d.; in the fancy branches, from 14s. to 16s.

Has any considerable reduction taken place within these few years?—A very considerable reduction has taken place since 1826.

Was the rate of wages generally steady previous to that time?—Yes, generally so; and as a proof of it, I may say that the rate of wages from 1804 to 1824 was not diminished more than four or five per cent.

Do you consider that the statement, showing the amount of the poor-rates, which you have given in marks the deficiency of employment?—I conclude that it is a pretty fair criterion of the condition of the poor.

I have selected the amount of the poor-rates for those years, which, from the average prices of wheat, admit of fair comparison; during which time, according to this evidence of the witness himself, the trade has been good or bad.

	Years.	Permanent Poor.			Casual Poor.			Gross Parochial Expenditure.			Average Price of Wheat.	
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Good Trade - - -	1815	3,586	18	-	1,299	11	-	12,081	-	-	63	8
	1820	4,357	4	10	4,253	1	6	15,684	1	-	65	10
	1821	4,650	8	11	4,084	11	3	14,891	17	-	54	5
	1822	4,366	7	8	3,575	16	7	14,583	15	5	43	3
	1823	4,199	5	7	2,389	11	5	12,734	5	-	51	9
	1824	3,762	1	2	2,394	4	-	12,352	1	2	62	-
Reduction in Wages and Distress - - -	1826	3,676	18	-	2,069	2	3	11,868	-	-	57	-
	1827	4,132	13	10	2,829	15	7	13,783	17	-	56	9
	1828	3,917	13	-	2,056	17	-	11,877	6	-	60	6
	1829	4,001	4	4	2,885	-	-	13,789	11	4	65	3
Liberal Board and General Election - - -	1830	-	-	-	9,278	-	-	23,138	-	-	-	-
Trade Worse - - -	1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	17,515	-	-	-	-
Population in - - -		1811			17,923.							
— in - - -		1821			21,242.							
— in - - -		1831			27,070.							
Annual value of the two parishes - - -					£.57,779.							

Assuming the following statement to be correct, a notion may be formed of the importance of providence and economy among the operative class.

In the course of the last year how many weeks do you think the men have been unemployed?—It sometimes happens that the individuals in work at one time are out at another; but on the whole I should think that, dividing the quantity among the whole number, that they had not more than seven months' employ in the year, full work.*

The following passage from the evidence of another witness examined before this Committee, tends to throw light upon some of the causes of the distress which exists in the Coventry district, and also, perhaps, of the result of expectations raised under the system of management above described.

The witness is Mr. John Hall, silk throwster and manufacturer, at Coggeshall, in the county of Essex.

A complaint is made that the distress proceeds from the competition of France in the silk manufacture, since the reduction of the duties.

It is stated on the other side, that it is owing to the inferiority of the work at Coventry, and the resistance on the part of the weavers to the introduction of machinery, that would enable them to stand any competition. The last witness admitted that it had been destroyed when it was attempted to be established in November 1831.

Mr. Hall has adopted the machinery which the people at Coventry reject, and considers that if the newest improvements were adopted cordially at Coventry, every hand would have regular employment.

How many men do you employ?—I have about 70 men; about half are parishioners. My good hands working on rack looms average 25s. per week.

How many hours a day must they work to earn 25s.?—They do not work above 48 hours in the week.

Working.

* This witness considers that the wages which a weaver might earn now in seven months would amount to 7 s. a week for the whole year, not including what might be earned by his wife and children, for each of whom there is employment in this trade.

Mr. Hall, another witness, examined by House of Commons.

His evidence.

Working four days a week, they earn 25s. ?—They do.

Is not that on an article of limited sale ?—Provided I had more time to attend to it, and could make it in all colours, I should have unlimited orders for it.

How do you account for so many men being out of work ?—I have gone to Coventry, and found a good many out of work. I give them two guineas to go to Coggeshall ; they have gone and stayed a week, and they would stay no longer. They had a combination among them, and would rather keep those men out of employment to keep up their bad machinery than suffer them to work for me ; I have tried that within the last two years. During the worst time of distress I had many men from Coventry come to me, and the moment they had got enough to travel back, they have gone.

What wages had been paid in Coventry when you were concerned in the trade ?—I think eight years ago the men would earn some of them 3*l.* a week, but 40*s.* and 50*s.* when working on gauzes or rich figures ; we paid those prices. [Mr. Hall was engaged for 20 years in a concern in Coventry.]

Do you mean to state that you are obliged to give the Coventry men 25*s.* a week for work, and that you cannot get it done for less at Coggeshall ?—I have never tried to get it done for less. I give two-thirds of Coventry prices ; if I was to offer less, all my hands would turn out immediately.

What was the average rate when you were paying 30*s.*, 40*s.*, or 50*s.* to particular men ?—The average rate would be 15*s.* on the common articles.*

Why could they not obtain employ in the line in which men were earning higher wages ? Because they had neither the skill nor the machinery ; but at times the briskness was such, that manufacturers used to go down and send the bellman about to invite the weavers to dinner or supper at a public-house, at Nuneaton for instance, to proclaim that a leg of mutton was provided and plenty of turnips, and when they got good hands there, used all the arguments they could to induce them to take their silk in preference to that of their old masters.

In what year was that ?—In 1814 up to 1825.

Have you paid more than 60*s.* a week ?—I dare say we have ; in 1825 we paid 80*s.* per gross for very common gauzes ; in my looms a man could make a gross per week.

What do you think the ordinary workmen at Coventry can now earn ?—I should think, on the ordinary machinery, 12*s.*, working six days a week.

During the prohibition they were better off ?—During the prohibition there was no difficulty in making profits ; money was in abundance, operatives were scarce. We are now in a different situation ; a lady can go from London to France one day, and return the next clothed in French silks. Once say they shall not wear them at all, and every man will turn smuggler to please the ladies ; therefore let the operatives open their eyes to their own interest, invite men to furnish them with good machinery, and we will beat them out of the market.

The following facts are contained in the evidence collected from Coventry :—

A steady trade for nearly 25 years.—*Vide* Evidence before Committee.

Wages during that time varying from 15*s.* to 4*l.*—J. Hall's Evidence.

The chief applicants to the parish are the weavers.—Directors' Replies.

According to the last census, they amount to 4,400.—*Vide* Evidence before Committee.

Average amount of poor's rates for 14 years past, 13,000*l.*—*Vide* Statement before Committee.

Annual value of charities in this city, upwards of 10,000*l.*—Common report.

Destruction of machinery, 2,000*l.*—*Vide* Estimate in Coventry.

The distress of this district has been the subject of petition to Parliament. There can be no doubt that there was very great distress prevailing amongst a class of operatives during my visit, but it is perhaps satisfactory to observe, that it has not wholly arisen from causes over which they have no control, and that past improvidence and injudicious conduct at present, must equally account with the removal of prohibitive duties for what it is to be hoped will only prove to them a temporary suffering.

Ribbon weaving is carried on to a great extent in all the villages around Coventry. Work is given out by the manufacturers to persons who are termed "undertakers," who contract for it at a certain price, and the amount of their profit then depends upon the rate at which they can procure labour ; they consequently seek it at the lowest possible price, and for this purpose it is said they often employ persons who are dependent on the country parishes, and which, of necessity, if done to any extent, must affect the rate of wages in the trade as much as if the competition arose in a foreign country.

The principal parishes in one direction, within nine miles from Coventry, where this manufacture is carried on, are Foleshill, Bedworth, Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton.

The property throughout this district is being fast consumed by the poor rates. The amount of the rate in each parish was submitted to the Silk Committee in the House of Commons, as evidence of the effects of free trade upon the condition of the poor ; but with what justice may be inferred from some facts which I have collected in these places.

FOLESHILL.

Population - - - - -	6,969
The annual value in 1815 - - - - -	£. 6,491
Amount of poor-rate in 1832 - - - - -	2,038

It has been managed for upwards of 20 years under the Guardian Act, and they who are termed

Facts connected
with the past and
present condition of
weavers in
Coventry.

Ribbon weaving.
Undertakers.

* It has been calculated that the average wages received by a weaver from 1815 to 1832 would be 14*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Able-bodied paid on
the road side.

Reason of.

Report of
Committee.

Choice of Overseers.

Accounts.

Guardians'
accounts.

Extracts from.

termed substantial householders have filled the offices of guardian, visitor and treasurer. Overseers and collectors have also been appointed.

Upon observing a number of persons of all ages standing by the door of a house on the road side, I was informed that they were the poor who, in consequence of the great increase of the rates, were being now paid their allowances in that place, with the view by appealing to their pride in not suffering the people of the neighbourhood to witness their dependence, to encourage them to support themselves. From the number and demeanour of the people, the measure must have totally failed. The people chiefly consisted of the single-hand weavers, whose trade is declining, and who have always been led to expect that the parish must support them under every circumstance of distress; they have also married early and brought up their children to the same trade, knowing that, in the absence of employment, their allowances would be regulated by the size of their families; they have therefore little shame in seeking what they think is their right,* and upon the expectation of which they have not saved from the high wages that they have received for years past. Their apparent insensibility may also have arisen from the knowledge that a large sum is annually raised professedly for their use, but which, according to a Report which has been drawn up by a committee of rate payers since the period of my visit, has been applied to very different purposes, a circumstance which may account equally with depression of trade for the amount of the rates. The following are extracts from this Report. It may be well to state, that the Chairman of this Committee is a gentleman of large property, and also a magistrate.

"The Committee proceeded to examine the accounts of the different overseers. They found that one had been appointed in 1813, and had been continued year after year until 1822, with a salary varying in different years from 30*l.* to 45*l.* and they observe, that this man could neither read nor write; that when he was first asked by the other parish officers to take upon him the situation of overseer and collector of the rates, he very properly urged his disqualification for the duties of that responsible office, but that objection was overruled, and his statement to the Committee was as follows: when he urged his inability to write or keep the accounts, one of the parish officers present at the meeting said, 'We have had those that could write too fast for us; you are the lad we want.' The Committee then found that charges had been introduced into his accounts of the most illegal and irregular nature; that in one year a sum of 150*l.* was paid by the Coventry Canal Company, and was never brought to the credit of the parish."

[A long list of these charges are appended to the Report of this committee, amongst which are the following, some of which constantly repeated, amounting to 355*l.*]

	£.	s.	d.
"Attending the parlour (the magistrates' room at Coventry) - - - - -	-	6	-
Two dozen of sparrows, 8 <i>d.</i> ; and writing a receipt, 1 <i>s.</i> - - - - -	-	1	8
Four dozen of sparrows, 1 <i>s.</i> 6½ <i>d.</i> ; book and levy, 12 <i>s.</i> - - - - -	-	13	6½
Removing the Irish people to Bulkington - - - - -	-	13	-
A hedgehog - - - - -	-	-	4
Looking for bastardy - - - - -	-	2	-
Expenses at the parlour, 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> ; and 2 hedgehogs, 8 <i>d.</i> - - - - -	-	3	2
Going to Coton, to prevent marriage - - - - -	-	4	-
Hedgehogs and sparrows - - - - -	-	4	6½
Spent at vestry meeting - - - - -	-	5	-
Serving summons on 5 men to serve in the 'Militia' - - - - -	-	10	-
Five days making a Return to Government of the last three years' accounts - - - - -	2	14	-

The Committee then examined the accounts of his successor, who filled this office from 1822 until 1829, and they found that "The accounts had been kept in the most irregular and inaccurate manner possible during the whole period of his continuance in office, not in books, for he had none, but on loose sheets and scraps of paper, although a sum of upwards of 18,000*l.* had passed through his hands on the parish account. In one page there had been an error in his additions of 150*l.* with which he had overcharged the parish, and in other instances he had omitted to give the parish credit for sums amounting to 400*l.*; and that he was continued in office for several years after he had been detected, until he voluntarily relinquished his office; and it will appear that he illegally paid out of the poor's rates to the surveyor of the highways no less a sum total than 1,240*l.*"

The Committee then examined the accounts of one of the guardians, and found "that during a period of eight years from 1822 to 1830, errors in his accounts of the most reprehensible nature were committed year after year, particularly in his casual pay book, without any notice having been taken of them. Innumerable instances occur of the figures having been altered, and in every instance the sum originally charged against the parish has been subsequently increased, never diminished. Amongst other charges are the following, never before inquired into or complained of by the official authorities of the parish."

	£.	s.	d.
"W. Brogden, for telling good news - - - - -	-	2	-
Snap at Wheatsheaf for four (which occurs repeatedly) - - - - -	-	4	-
Expenses at Mayor's parlour (for the Mayor and Chief Magistrate of the City of Coventry) - - - - -	-	7	6
Expenses choosing officers - - - - -	1	-	-
J. T. trouble and horse - - - - -	-	3	6
1827. Dec. 5: Error brought from month of May - - - - -	12	-	-
For Charlotte Stare's wedding! - - - - -	-	15	-
And for 'attending marriage'! - - - - -	-	2	6
Again paid, plums, currants, &c. - - - - -	1	15	-

1823: For

* It appears from the parish books that regular weekly relief in money commenced in this parish in 1649, and has continued ever since.

	£.	s.	d.
1823: For stones in 1819, 16 tons	2	-	-
Expenses for self and horse	1	-	6
Paid Mr. ——— extra salary, (without vestry order or sanction)* the			
Mayor of Coventry, and Parish Doctor	5	-	-
May: 'Casualty pay, month of May'	5	-	-
Mr. L. paid Mr. O. (Query, for what?)	6	6	-
Mr. L. extra (no vestry order)	5	-	-
Gave Governess (no vestry order)	5	5	-
44½ lbs. mutton at 4½ d.	-	16	-
Ditto for meat (no quantity stated)	1	18	-
64 lbs. mutton at 5 d.	1	6	-

"The committee direct attention to the meat sent to the workhouse, which was not supplied by the butchers contracting with the parish, but by the parish officers themselves, who happened to be farmers.

"The information given to the committee was as follows: when interrogating one of the officers as to the meaning of the charges made against himself and others, he stated that it was an understanding amongst the farmers that when a cow or sheep *dropped*, it should be sent to the workhouse, and dropped was explained to be 'when taken ill.'

"On examining the churchwarden's accounts, the same irregularities were observed; no books kept, bills were only produced which seemed to have been paid without scruple or inquiry by the guardians out of the poor's rates, and the committee have to remark upon various charges of an extraordinary nature in a churchwarden's accounts, such as sums paid for 'sparrows' heads' and 'hedgehogs'; '2l. 19s. for the hire of a carriage, and dinner; '10l. to the visitor for *inspecting* and *correcting* the parish accounts; '9l. 12s. paid for black cloth,' and a tailor's charge of 2l. for putting the church in mourning; '31l. 10s. for cast iron pillars to support the church; '4l. 2s. for port, sherry and *tent wines* for the sacrament; and that these, and a variety of other charges equally irregular, have been received by the churchwardens out of the *poor-rates*.

"The committee find that the present collector of the rates has misapplied the sum of 410l. 15s. since 1829, out of the poor rates, in purchasing materials for the roads and other purposes; they find that various sums of money to a large amount have been from time to time abstracted from the poor's fund by many of the parish officers for similar purposes, the particulars of all which they append to their Report, amounting to the sum of 2,041l. 17s. 5d. They found that the law expenses have amounted to 1,442l. 6s. 8d., from 1823 to 1831. They also have detected gross irregularities in the accounts of the late governor of the workhouse; that there had been great waste and extravagance in the quantity of provisions and clothing sent to the workhouse, and that on reference to the books it appeared that a very great proportion of the articles of provision, such as cheese, bacon, malt and tobacco, &c. had been supplied by the parish officers themselves, and that one had entered into contracts for many years for articles of the above description, to the amount of 1,490l.; one instance may be adduced:—Twenty pounds of tobacco were sent (by a parish officer) at one time, though only about eleven of the paupers used it, without any order, and on its arrival 10lbs. of it were sent back, the governor conceiving that the quantity was *excessive*; various sums were paid to another officer for lamb and pork sent by him to the house, for which he charged 6d., and even 7d., when the contract with the butcher was only 5½d. Again, to 209 lbs. of meat, 14l. 12s., no price is here stated, but it amounts to upwards of 1s. 3d. per lb., and such has been the system of fraud, speculation and extravagance in the expenses of the workhouse, that on an average each pauper maintained in it has cost the parish 5s. per week; and this expensive and ill-governed establishment was allowed to go on without any inquiry into, or reform of the abuses, frauds and impositions which may well be supposed to have existed in it. The committee are therefore of opinion, that if at the expiration of the current year a material reduction of expense connected with the maintenance of the poor in the workhouse be not effected, it will be desirable to consider whether the establishment should not be given up altogether, the appointment of guardians and governor discontinued, and *that the parish shall avail itself of the opportunity of sending paupers to a similar establishment in some other parish.*

"Finally,—The committee have had seriously and deeply to lament the extraordinary apathy and reluctance on the part of many of the respectable and influential rate-payers of the parish, to assist in the laborious investigation of the accounts, but they are not without hope that their labours have not been in vain.

(Signed)

"Chairman of the Committee."

If this Report be correct, it may well be asked why the poor should not seek for themselves the full advantage of the large sum, amounting to a third of the annual value of the property in the parish, which has been thus appropriated. The number of bastards in the books is on an average annually between 30 and 40; the population has more than doubled in 20 years.

Return for 1811	-	-	-	-	3,480
„ - 1831	-	-	-	-	6,969

Upon examining the statement of the poor rates, given in to the Silk Committee by one of the guardians, who is also an "undertaker," as stated above, to prove the distress of this district, it appears that the rates have been considerably higher in years during which, in other parts of his evidence, he admits the trade to have been good, while the population was much less than in some of the years in which he describes unparalleled distress to have proceeded from the introduction of foreign goods:—

TRADE GOOD.				TRADE BAD.			
<u> </u>				<u> </u>			
£.				£.			
In 1820, Rates	-	-	- 1,561	In 1828, Rates	-	-	- 964
1821, —	-	-	- 1,481	1829, —	-	-	- 1,083
1822, —	-	-	- 1,437	1830, —	-	-	- 2,192
				1831, —	-	-	- 1,499

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

This Report does not convey an adequate idea of the whole amount of pauperism in this parish, since there is besides a composition rate raised for the purpose of employing the men on the roads, and men are also sent on the round to the farmers.

BEDWORTH.

At two miles distant from Foleshill, in the same direction, is the parish of Bedworth, where there are extensive collieries; the people are also engaged in ribbon-weaving, and there are upwards of 1,900 acres of land, of which 30 only are common. Here also the amount of the rate was sent to the Silk Committee, accompanied, amongst other, with the following remarks from the overseer:

Remarks of overseer.

"The poor-rates press so heavily upon the rate-payers, that it is impossible for them to afford that relief which the necessities of the poor absolutely require; and it is my firm belief, that another year will reduce most of the middling class of the parishioners to a state of pauperism. There are now numbers of families who are obliged to receive relief from the parish, although the man and the woman are both in full employment, their earnings being so small, that it is impossible for them to get as much as the magistrates allow for their earnings to be made up to."

The property assessed	-	-	-	-	-	-	£.5,940
The poor-rate for year ending 1832	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,238

Population.

The population (1831) is 3,980, of which the overseer states that he considers nearly 1,000 are non-parishioners, that 748 received relief out of the house the week in which he wrote his replies, and that they have several in other parishes who are receiving pay. The total number in the house is 40, which is about one-third of the number it is capable of holding.

Replies to queries.

In answer to question 12, in the queries, What, on the whole, might an average labourer expect to earn in the year, &c.? the overseer has answered, labourer 10s., weaver 7s. per week.

Is relief given according to any scale?—The magistrates order relief upon a certain scale, about 3s. to grown persons, and from 1s. 6d. to 2s. each to others, per week.

What, &c. be the effects of ordering relief in kind?—Bread would in most cases be better than money; it would *then* go into the family, when money, as now, does not.

Security against fraud.

I inquired in this parish what security was provided against impositions by persons claiming relief who were able to maintain themselves; I found a paid overseer and a visitor had been appointed, the former kept a shop (dealing in articles which the poor required), and the latter was a lad who was said to visit the weavers, the colliers, and the labourers, to ascertain their real condition.

Paying the poor.

In attending the payment of the poor, I observed the young and the old equally applying for their allowances, daughters for their parents, wives for their husbands, &c. I observed one woman, a parishioner, applying for casual relief for her husband. She was asked why her husband had not applied? she stated that he was ill in Yorkshire, at the distance of 113 miles, and that she had come purposely to apply; upon being asked whether she had not applied upon another occasion by letter, and received the remittance safely by the post for the same purpose, she acknowledged that she had, but that she had thought it better to come herself this time, upon which the overseer gave her 10s. I inquired what this woman must have paid for her fare by the coach by which she admitted that she had travelled; I was told that it was exactly 30s., and it was afterwards proved that she had come for the purpose of seeing her relatives, who lived in this neighbourhood. I asked the overseer why he did not insist upon men applying themselves for relief; he said that when he did so, the wives were sure to go to the magistrates, and by telling some piteous tale, procure an order for themselves; and that he now relieved the wives to save himself the trouble of attending upon a summons. Another woman then applied, who said that she was in a starving condition, and she had hardly made the application, when she was surprised by the person who had given her employment at 10d. a day, as a hay-maker, in the morning; the overseer who was paying the poor did not know that her story was untrue.

Connexion between bad trade and high poor rates.

It was stated here, as in other places, that the badness in trade alone was the cause of the increase of the poor rates, and that hitherto the people had been earning good wages, enough to support themselves and to save. But here again the cause of improvidence among the people, and the connexion between the state of trade and the parish expenditure, may be inferred from the statement of the rates for different years sent to the committee; for instance—

					£.	s.
Trade good	{	From March 1824 to March 1825	-	-	-	1,167 10
		— 1826 to March 1827	-	-	-	1,431 18
Trade bad	{	— 1828 to March 1829	-	-	-	1,132 19
		— 1830 to March 1831	-	-	-	1,434 6
Population, 1821	-	-	-	3,519	-	-
					-	-
					1831	-
					-	-
					-	3,980

NUNEATON.

Four miles from Bedworth is the town of Nuneaton. The severe pressure of the rates here has been made the subject of petition to the House of Commons.

A witness before the Silk Committee, gave a statement of the rates from 1818 until 1832, and connects the amount in the last three years with the decline of trade. It appears, however, that the rates were,—

In 1819	-	-	-	£.3,938	12	11		In 1829	-	-	-	£.2,307	2	5
In 1820	-	-	-	4,192	18	9		In 1831	-	-	-	3,619	5	11

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Distribution of relief when trade is good.

The witness attempts to explain this in the following manner:—"During these years, 1819 and 1820, there was no select vestry. A tradesman had a salary of 150 *l.* a year to collect the levies and pay the poor, and very much of the parish money went into the shop, even before it was paid from the workhouse, and many were most improperly relieved. In 1820, 1,912 paupers cost the parish 3,224 *l.* 9 *s.* 5 *d.*, or about 34 *s.* 9 *d.* a head, whereas, in 1832, 3,240 paupers were supported for 3,759 *l.* 8 *s.*, or about 1 *l.* 3 *s.* a head, although in 1819 and 1820 the trade was fair and the prices good." A reduction of the rates which followed for some years he ascribes to the appointment of a select vestry. The following are answers given by this witness, which, though intended to prove distress, also show the manner in which the relief is granted.

Do you know whether there are instances of persons receiving a higher amount of parish relief than the amount paid to a man who is in work?—I have known that to be the case in many instances.

Are the committee to understand that a man can only earn from 7 *s.* to 9 *s.* a week, if fully employed upon a single hand-loom?—Yes.

Is it your opinion that it would be better for a man to work even at a lower rate, than to be altogether unemployed, and receive relief from the poor's rates?—It might be in one sense, as it would relieve the parish from some of its burthens; but even where they were working at a lower rate, they have been receiving parochial relief at the same time.

I attended here also the payment of the poor, and being struck with the numbers of persons apparently between the ages of 20 and 50, who were receiving small sums of money, I inquired of the overseer whether it were possible that, as it was then in the middle of the harvest, that these people were unable to procure work, he replied, "Yes, they might, but they can't bear harvesting; there are some of them that have been brought up to weaving, and they don't like our out-door work." I inquired of this person whether any Irish or Scotch were employed by the farmers; he said that there were a good number, and that without them they could not get the harvest in. I examined here the solicitor to the parish, a man past 70 years of age; he had observed the total change of feeling undergone by the poor on the subject of parish dependance. He remembered, at one time when the ribbon weavers in that district no more contemplated applying to the parish than the most respectable inhabitant does at present; and he referred to cases where men not being satisfied with their employment, though their wages were better than at present, had left the trade and enlisted as soldiers. He then mentioned a case which had only occurred a few days before, in an application made to himself by a lad, to procure him relief from the parish. His answer to him was, "Go away and work, you foolish boy;" the boy's answer was, "Ah, but sir, I married yesterday, and I expect the parish to find me a place to live in." He mentioned another instance of three young men who had plundered his own garden. Being offered to be saved a committal to bridewell, on condition of their serving as ballotmen in the militia, they said they preferred the bridewell.

Payment of the poor.

Harvesting.

Solicitor to the parish.

Early marriage.

Children.

On observing to a person the extraordinary number of children in the place, he said it was no wonder, since if the trade was good they could all find employment, and if not, they gave the parents a stronger claim for relief.

Population, 1811 - - - 4,796. - - - 1831 - - - 7,799.

Population.

I have not received any replies to the queries sent to this parish.

CHILVERS COTON.

This parish adjoins that of Nuneaton.

Mr. Harris, a respectable farmer, informed me that he owned some land, that was then a perfect burthen to him, in consequence of the increase of the rates, and that he should be glad if any person would take it as a gift. He said that the trade not being good, the numbers of weavers and their families that were relieved consumed the property of the parish. This he ascribed to their previous improvidence, and to the dependence which they placed on the orders made by the magistrates whenever they applied. It was, he said, the habit of the magistrates openly to reproach the overseers before the paupers for not relieving them sufficiently, and that many being respectable farmers, they now preferred relieving any applicants to attending upon a summons.

Property consumed by poor rate.

The parish of Coton is nearly under the same circumstances, as regards the employment of the people, as Nuneaton, where, as it has been stated, the select vestry has been established to check the abuses that used to exist. Here, however, a select vestry had been abolished for the same purpose, it being said that the negligence and partialities of the vestrymen had added greatly to the expense. It is now under the direction of a paid overseer and an open vestry. It had been divided into six districts, and the parish was desirous of having one overseer living in each district; but the magistrates refused to appoint more than two.

Select vestry abolished, with a view to economy.

The population of Coton, in 1811 - 1,873. - - - 1831 - 2,494.

Annual value - - - - - £.6,020.

There are 54 inmates of the workhouse; the weekly average number relieved out of the house are, 89 males, 95 females; the greatest part of these are heads of families; present and former occupation is weaving.

The following answers are instructive as to the mode in which the poor rates are expended:

To how many able-bodied men has occasional relief been given during the last year?—This cannot be answered accurately; families have been relieved by food from the poor-house, for several years previous to the present; the general impression is that they are increasing.

Distribution.

Is relief given in consequence of the advice or order of the magistrate?—Frequently the magistrates make an order for relief to those who are known to be idle and undeserving, and it is this class who are most troublesome to the parish.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Is relief ever given to able-bodied applicants, without setting them to work?—Frequently, because we find no employment for them.

Is it given according to any and what scale?—A man, his wife and four children, are supposed to earn 10s.; if they do not it is made up to them.

What in the whole might an average man, obtaining average amount of employment, expect to earn in the whole year, &c.?—It is impossible to form an accurate account of what each person would get, notwithstanding wages are so low (in the ribbon trade;) if they got regular employment, we consider a subsistence might be obtained.

What number of bastards have been chargeable to your parish; expense, &c.?—Average number, 30; annual expense, 165*l.*; loss to the parish in five years, 630*l.* 1*s.* 7*d.*

Are there many small cottages in your parish?—Yes.

Are these dwellings in any case exempted?—Not exempt, but the magistrates will not permit the rates to be enforced.

These replies were given by some of the principal rate-payers assembled for that purpose.

The parish is perhaps more oppressed with the charge for the maintenance of the poor than any other in the county; it was said that last year two-thirds of the people were living upon the charity, and the rates paid by the other third; and it is impossible any where in the neighbourhood to make any inquiry respecting the poor, without being referred to this parish and to that of Nuneaton, as places where the poor are peculiarly distressed, and the property much burthened by the rate.

ATHERSTONE.

I next visited the township of Atherstone, five miles distant from Nuneaton.

Employment of people.

The principal employment of the people is in the manufactory of felt hats. This affords occupation to men, women and children. The wages vary according to the department in which they are employed. Few men earn less than 15*s.* a week, and many from 25*s.* to 40*s.*; women may earn from 7*s.* to 12*s.*, and children from 3*s.* to 6*s.* There is a time in the winter when it is inconvenient to carry on some parts of the manufacture, and some hands are thrown out of work; but though this is a certain prospect, few save their earnings, and a great proportion during that season apply to the parish.

Select vestry.

Combination.

There is a select vestry and a paid overseer, but orders are frequently made against their judgment by the magistrates, and there are constant differences taking place between them. The hatters are able to maintain their high rate of wages by an extensive combination which they have throughout the kingdom, by means of which they prevent the great proportion of the masters from taking more than two apprentices at one time, and by which the whole numbers of journeymen in the trade are kept down. Should any of these men be thrown out of work, he would, subject to certain conditions, be allowed 1*l.* a week from their own funds until he obtained employment. Mr. Wellday, the largest manufacturer in this town, requested my attention to an instance of this confederacy. He had requested Mr. Phillips, of Manchester, to send him two young men who had served their apprenticeship with him. They had been in Atherstone for one day; they were then sent for by Mr. Wellday, and asked if they were willing to take work at his prices; they said that they should be happy, but that his own men had called a meeting, and had determined not to allow them to work for him. Upon being asked the reason which the men had given for this, they replied, that Mr. Phillips, from whom they came, was in the habit of taking more than two apprentices at one time, and that this Mr. Wellday's men objected to; they said that they had threatened to strike work immediately if Mr. Wellday persevered in keeping them. That gentleman then, in my presence, gave them the means to return to Manchester. Upon my stating to him that

Men relieved who combine to keep up wages.

I did not see any objection to the men doing their utmost by any legitimate mode to keep up the rate of wages, he called the overseer of the parish, and desired him to state to me if the men who were receiving these high wages scrupled to apply to him for relief; he said that the contrary was the fact; that he knew many men who had been earning high wages all the summer that received relief either for themselves or their families in the winter. The following is the written statement sent from the parish:—Fifty families in the winter are regularly dependent upon the rate. There are 54 people maintained in the house, at an expense of 3*s.* 1*d.* independent of salaries, &c. Last winter 190 persons were on the books, two-thirds of whom were heads of families, and about 650 persons, chiefly hatters and bricklayers, were relieved; 100 able men were casually relieved. I asked Mr. Wellday if he could tell in what way men, who were in regular employment and receiving high wages, spent their earnings; upon which he produced to me a calculation that he had lately made, by which it appeared that there were in that town, containing a population of 3,870, 37 beer-houses, and that the profits upon the capital necessarily invested upon them amounted, by a curious coincidence, to the sum raised for the maintenance and relief of the poor of the current year. He stated, that this circumstance, connected with the drunkenness (a general complaint in the town) of the men, must account, in great measure, for the sad waste of wages that he observes to take place among them. As illustrating the means which men engaged in this trade have of saving, an instance was mentioned to me by another manufacturer, of one journeyman hatter, who had saved in the course of his life 1,000*l.* Mr. Wellday had attempted to lower the wages upon one occasion, which was instantly followed up by a strike. He applied to the magistrates for assistance, but they advised him to continue his wages at the same rate. He said, "that sooner than submit to the tyranny of being compelled to pay high wages and high poor rates, to be both spent in drunkenness and debauchery within his sight, he would either take his capital abroad, or to some distant place in this country which was less demoralized by the Poor Laws." His weekly payment in wages amounted to between 300*l.* and 400*l.* His objection, he stated, was not

Number relieved.

Population.

Beer-houses.

Drunkenness.

What hatters are able to save.

Mr. Wellday's intention.

Weekly wages paid by him.

to paying high wages, but to contribute to a fund, from which no person derived any real advantage, and from which nothing but evil followed.

In answer to the question respecting bastardy, it is stated, that on an average there has been for the last five years, one every fortnight, and the loss to the parish from this incontinence has been upwards of one-half. Litigation arising out of settlement cases, 116*l*. Annual value, 8,008*l*.

BIRMINGHAM.

The last important town in Warwickshire that I visited was Birmingham. The poor are commonly said to be provided for here under a management superior to that of other places. To a certain extent this is the case; the disorder visible in other parishes is not to be observed here; but upon closer examination, necessarily restricted from want of authority, some of the evils which result from a misapplication of the Poor Laws might also be seen in operation here.

What is now called the parish of Birmingham, including the two parishes of St. Martin and St. Philip, is subject in the conduct of its affairs to the provisions of a private Act (passed in the 32d of Geo. III.), and lately amended in the 2d of Will. IV.; 108 guardians are therein directed to be chosen to serve for three years, who are invested with power to appoint any number of overseers of the poor. The town has been divided into 12 districts, and an overseer is appointed to each, whose duty it is to collect the rates, and visit the poor.

The accounts are kept by the vestry-clerk at an office in the workhouse; the expenditure in and out of the house is entered under different heads, and the whole is annually published on a single sheet. By this it appears that 4,283 cases were relieved last year; I was informed at Birmingham, that a case included upon an average four persons; it is said by some persons to be less; these however do not include the inmates of the house or the asylum. The number therefore more or less dependent upon the parish, must be reckoned at between 16,000 and 17,000; the annual expenditure of the parish exceeds 55,000*l*.; the population in 1831 is 110,914; the annual value in 1815, 247,058.

The workhouse contains 439 persons.

	Under 7.	From 7 to 14.	Upwards of 17.
Males	16	29	185
Females	9	23	177
	- - - 439		

Their previous occupations, chiefly in manufactories, are so various as to be impossible to specify those to which each belonged. The house is superintended by a governor and a matron; the sexes are separated at night; employment is found for the men within, in grinding corn, and in supplying the wants of the house, but no regular work is provided for the women. The average expense a head per week is 3*s*. 4*½d*., which includes the governor's board, and that of the resident apothecary. The two circumstances which are said to distinguish the management of the poor at Birmingham, are, 1st, work by the piece being made a condition of relief to able paupers, and 2dly, instead of placing small sums of money at the disposal of men with families, the children are maintained separately in the Asylum. The following extracts however from the Replies written by the vestry-clerk, show that this experiment has not yet been fairly made. He says, "There are no books distinguishing able-bodied from other paupers." "That the overseers at Birmingham have always been unwilling to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, by withholding relief when distress really exists." "That relief is given occasionally according to the number of children, but not given to eke out the wages of able-bodied persons *wholly* employed." No rule therefore with regard to relief is uniformly or exclusively adopted; and it appeared upon further inquiry, that some persons having families, were always relieved in money, and that others might receive it upon two or three occasions, before they are employed in the regular mode, which is in wheeling sand from a mine to a certain distance, at the rate of 1*d*. per barrow. That relief of various sorts is also distributed to out-paupers, in the shape of clothes, shoes, &c. without work done for the parish; and upon inquiring the meaning of the words "*not wholly employed*," it was explained to refer to those persons whose masters had certified that they only enabled them to earn a half of the average rate of wages in any branch of manufacture. The latter system being obviously open to great abuse, I inquired what security was provided against it. This was said to consist in the poor being visited at their own houses, to ascertain their real condition; this however, to be effectual, appears to depend upon the character of the work in which they are engaged, since there are many employments which only require such implements as might be carried upon the person, and concealed on the approach of the overseer. On this subject Mr. Lewis, the governor of the workhouse at Erdington, who has the management of the poor at Aston, the immediately adjoining parish to Birmingham, and now included within the borough, stated that he was in a manufacturing house for 15 years at Birmingham, and that he is well acquainted with the practices of different masters, and that from his own knowledge he can state that what are termed "small masters" in this town, *i. e.* those employing one or two journeymen, and who also work for some of the other masters, were in the constant habit of employing men who were receiving allowances from the parish, and that many in consequence were able to undersell other masters who were paying the full wages themselves; he could not say whether the practice was continued, but that the inducement to it was perhaps greater than ever, since the demand for cheap labour and cheap productions was never so general as in Birmingham at present.

This was a fact to which my attention was directed by some of the mechanics themselves, saying that the race for cheap production was never so great as at the present time, and that many shifts in making articles of inferior materials were resorted to for this purpose.

Bastardy.

Litigation.

Annual value.

Birmingham.

Division of, for relieving the poor.

Accounts.

Number of cases relieved.

Number of persons. Annual expenditure.

Annual value.

Population.

Workhouse inmates.

Superintendence.

Average expense.

Peculiar mode of relieving the able-bodied.

Replies of vestry-clerk.

Payment of wages out of rates.

Mr. Lewis's evidence on this point.

Motive for its continuance at present.

Appendix (A.)	purpose. It is therefore not improbable that many are now induced to accept low wages, in the expectation of assistance from the parish, either for themselves or their families. The certificate of a master does not offer much security against the practice, and men might possibly be receiving work from more than one master, of which the parish would know nothing. If this is carried to any extent, there is no reason why it should not be followed by all the mischief, in a district like Birmingham, which it is known to occasion in the country parishes. It may degrade the mechanic, as it does the labourer, it may render him equally improvident and reckless in his habits, it may thereby give a stimulus to population, and ultimately reduce the rate of wages in all employments where particular skill is not required. How far this system is in operation at present, or what evil it has already produced, it is not easy to ascertain; the condition of a large portion of the people, however, is far from satisfactory. The population has outreached the capital, which is necessary for its profitable support. The trade, it is said, has been more depressed within the period of the two last censuses than within the preceding one; yet the following returns show that the ratio of increase in the people has been greater during the last period than during the former :—		
Reports.			
C. P. Villiers, Esq.			
Operation of this system in manufacturing districts.			
Condition of people.			
	1811.	1821.	1831.
Increase of population.	70,209.	85,416.	110,914.
Extent of pauperism.	The pauperism in the town is very extensive, as appears by the number of cases relieved during the past year, and a very large proportion of the people are now brought within the influence of any system of public relief. Some reports, which had been made during my visit, upon the state of different parts of the town, by gentlemen appointed at a public meeting for the purpose, tend to prove this.		
Reports upon the condition of the people.	In one of these reports it was stated that some men were found to be living upon 8s. 6d. a week, having three, four and five children to maintain; that some others were living upon 4s. 3d. a week; that some widows were living on 3s. a week, earned by themselves, and others were living by what work they were able to procure, and they were reported to be submitting to their privations with patience, and as having hitherto abstained from parish assistance. Another report stated, that men, who had been earning 14s. a week and upwards, were contemplating a dependence upon the parish, and that some tradesmen were falling into the rank of journeymen. To another report was appended a letter by one of the reporters, stating, that in some parts of the town the condition of the people was good, and that much of the distress in others had been occasioned by idleness and absence from work.		
Condition of particular trades different.	The different condition of the working classes at the same time is not unusual at Birmingham; general distress from trade here can hardly occur. The manufactures are so various, that the causes for depression in particular ones are seldom in operation together; and though wages in one trade may be greatly reduced, they may, in others, be exceeding the average rate. And there are doubtless many causes to account for pauperism and distress in this large district besides those public ones to which they are generally referred. A medical gentleman, who has great experience in attending the poor, stated, that he had constant occasion to observe their want of economy and good management, and that in the provisions which they purchased, and the places where they procured them, neither the money which they received from the parish nor their earnings went near so far as they might otherwise do. He also observed upon the practice among the poorest persons of keeping dogs. He thought that much useful benevolence might be exercised in directing the poor as to the best method of economising their means. Dr. Johnstone, of Edgbaston, to whom I have before referred, as certain authority in all that concerns the interest of the poor, considers that there are now not less than between 6,000 and 7,000 persons who have not partaken in the least degree of the great moral improvement wrought in this town during the last 20 years, and who are in a state of great debasement, perfectly uninstructed, and reckless and dissolute in their habits, and this, he considers, must account for a great portion of the misery and pauperism to be found in the town. To remedy this, he thinks that much might be done by publicly providing for their instruction, by a more judicious mode of relieving their necessities, and by a more effective administration of the criminal law. He dwelt much upon the connexion between pauperism and crime, and of the encouragement which the latter received from the tardy and demoralizing character of criminal proceeding. The committal to the county gaol, the interval between that and the assize, and the associates met with during confinement, all tend, in his opinion, to an effect opposite to that for which punishment is intended. Cases, he said, were not unfrequent of persons deliberately committing offences for the purpose of being lodged in the county gaol, for the sake of the society, and that when the wives and families of criminals once become chargeable to the parish, they usually remained paupers for life.		
Causes of pauperism.			
Dr. Parsons.			
Dr. Johnstone.			
Character of a portion of the people.			
Connection between pauperism and crime.			
Evidence of mechanics.	Upon examining some of the higher class of mechanics themselves, men of very remarkable intelligence and information, as to their opinion of the general influence of the Poor Laws upon the habits of the people, they did not scruple to state, in regretting the fact, that there were many even among themselves who were much disposed to be extravagant and careless of their earnings; that many preferred making a display in their dress or in their lodging at present to providing for their future necessities; and though they said that there was nothing like a calculation ever made, with a view to any advantage from depending upon the parish, yet that many of them, when they wasted their wages, or omitted to save them, had the idea, that if they should come to the workhouse, it was not the worst thing that could happen to them, and that as good men as they were had gone there before them.		

I learnt from these men, that they had at times ample means of saving; that many did at present belong to clubs or societies, to which they made some contribution, either monthly or annually; and one informed me, that he and a few of his friends had withdrawn 300*l.* from the bank in May last (1832), under some apprehension of danger from the state of the country when the Ministry resigned; and the actuary of the savings banks states, that at that time he received notice to withdraw 16,000*l.* which he considered to belong chiefly to the working class.

It is obvious, from this evidence, that much of the population are under circumstances in which the parochial system of relief may exercise a powerful influence upon their habits and character. And when it is considered that the 108 guardians, who are the distributors of a sum exceeding 50,000*l.* are elected by the rate-payers at large, it is to be feared that many of the poor may expect to find among them ill-judging favourites and partizans. The negligence which had been shown for many years by the rate-payers in appointing the guardians, and by the guardians when appointed, had led, a few years since, to the formation of a party to secure a better and more regular system of election. But there is no security for the continuance of this party.

The condition of paupers can hardly be expected to operate in deterring those, who are represented in the reports as earning between 4*s.* and 8*s.* a week, from throwing themselves on the support of the parish. The following is the table of diet at the workhouse.

Guardians.

Influence of parochial allowance upon the poor.

TABLE of Diet for the In-poor of the *Birmingham* Workhouse.
Ordinary Diet.

	BREAKFAST.	DINNER.	SUPPER.
Sunday - -	Rice Milk.	Beef, Vegetables and Beer.	Broth with Bread cut in it.
Monday - -	Milk Porridge and Bread.	Bread, Cheese and Beer.	Milk Porridge and Bread.
Tuesday - -	As Monday.	As Sunday.	As Sunday.
Wednesday -	As Monday.	Pea-soup or Irish Stew with an allowance of Bread.	As Monday.
Thursday -	As Sunday.	As Sunday.	As Sunday.
Friday - -	As Monday.	As Monday.	As Monday.
Saturday - -	As Monday.	As Wednesday.	As Monday.

Sick Diet.

The same as the ordinary diet, only that mutton is allowed for dinner in the place of beef, and rice pudding instead of bread and cheese or soup.

Low Diet.

	BREAKFAST.	DINNER.	SUPPER.
Every day in the Week }	Milk Porridge and Bread.	Bread, Broth and Pudding.	Gruel or Milk Porridge and Bread.

Barley water or imperial, as a beverage *ad libitum*.

N. B.—Wine, &c. as prescribed by the surgeons.

It appeared that some men were allowed to earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a day in wheeling sand; and I was informed that this work operated very unequally upon the different persons to whom it was assigned. It is said to be not disliked by men who have been accustomed to hard labour out of doors. It is in a healthy situation, and men have been known voluntarily to remain some years in the employment; but where the pauper has been used to the finer sort of mechanical work and close confinement, it operates with peculiar severity; for this reason, as well as from no distinction being ever made by the parish between those who have fallen by vice or by misfortune, the persons employed at this work appeared to excite great sympathy in the town.

Earnings at the sand mine.

Nature of the work.

Sympathy of town excited.

Upon reviewing the system at Birmingham, therefore, though much evil is prevented by the respectability of many of the guardians, and the publicity given to the accounts, still, with the exception of its mode of treating the infant poor, referred to in another place, it can hardly be said to afford any very striking contrast to the system of management in other places.

Review of system.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

The first manufacturing town in this county that I visited was Bromsgrove, containing a population of 8,500. Annual value in 1815, 26,661*l.* Poors rates nearly 5,000*l.* There is considerable extent of land in the parish. The people in the town are chiefly engaged in the manufacture of nails and needles. A select vestry, under the 59 Geo. III. has been established for some time, composed of farmers and manufacturers. The assistant overseer had only been in office one year; his conduct had recently occasioned much discussion in the town. It was alleged by some, that this person was cruel to the poor, and over-careful of his own interest; and by others, that he only performed his duty strictly, and was acting for the real interest of the parish; he had already effected some reduction of expense. I attended a vestry meeting, where cases of different kinds were to be disposed of. The

Bromsgrove.
Population, value, rates.
Select vestry.

Character of overseer.

A vestry meeting.

Appendix (A.)	overseer, aware of the charges of oppression that were made against him, requested me first to visit the workhouse, in order that I might witness with what comfort the inmates were treated.
Reports.	He particularly directed my attention to the case of an elderly female, whom he stated to be a pensioned servant of a family in the neighbourhood. Anxious to end her days in some comfortable abode, she had selected in preference the workhouse, under his management, for which she paid 7s. a week, partaking of the same fare as the pauper inmates. On returning to the vestry, a discussion took place on the subject of an unfortunate widow, with three children, whose husband had died of the cholera, having been left for two days in a state of perfect destitution. No attention having been paid to her application for relief, the vestry directed her wants to be attended to. The next case was that of a man, aged between 30 and 40, strong and able to work, who stated that he had lost his wife and two children, and that he had still three to maintain; <i>he wanted some assistance</i> . It was then proved that this man had received 5 <i>l.</i> upon the death of his wife from a friendly society; that he was earning 11 <i>s.</i> a week, that he had not been out of work, that he had a house, and that he had claimed to vote in right of a freehold, for the county. One vestryman alone remonstrated upon this claim; the man, however, still appealed to the vestry, and especially to the chairman, to whom he appeared to be known, whose reply was in these words,—“No, John, we can't do any thing for you this time, you must go, indeed.” The next was a young man, aged about 22 years, bringing with him a wife, younger than himself, and two children; he said he was unable to support himself and his children upon 9 <i>s.</i> a week. It was then proved that iron had been given out to him some days before by the overseer, for the purpose of making nails. Upon being asked why he had not done the work, by which he might have increased his wages, he stated that his wife had been ill, and that he was obliged to attend upon her. At this moment the woman fell into a fit, to which he had said she was subject. The vestry then ordered the wife and children to be placed in the house, and the man either to work up the iron or to enter the house himself. He then quitted the vestry, leaving his wife and children; on the same evening he fetched them all away, and undertook to maintain them himself. The next was a tailor, who it was said was addicted to drinking, as indeed his appearance at the time testified. He applied for casual relief, stating that he had a wife and two children. The vestry ordered him 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> ; he complained of its insufficiency, and said, that if he did not have more he should “go upon the tramp,” and leave his wife and children for the parish to maintain. He left the room abusing the vestry. A vestryman remarked, “that is a common threat if we refuse them.” Another case was a woman who brought her child with her, stating that it was ill. The vestry seemed disinclined to attend to her, when she appealed to a vestryman who she said had always befriended her, and that she hoped he would not desert her upon this occasion: her appeal was in the end successful. The last case was that of an Irish woman, with a child in her arms, who applied for means to return to her husband, who was in Tipperary, but whose place of settlement was in Bromsgrove. She was then questioned as to her marriage. She said that she was married at Cork, that she was a Catholic, and her husband a Protestant, and that a gentleman, who said he was a Presbyterian, or, as she said, something of that kind, had married them; that her husband was a soldier, and that she had come over to see his father, and had during her visit been delivered of that child in the parish, and therefore she hoped that the gentlemen would give her 30 <i>s.</i> to go back to her husband. No other evidence being stated in support of her story, she was asked if she would take 15 <i>s.</i> ; she said it would not do; she was asked if she would take 1 <i>l.</i> ; that she also refused; she was then asked if she would promise to go if she was paid 25 <i>s.</i> ; she said it was very hard of the gentlemen, but she supposed she must take that. It was then ordered to be paid to her; one of the vestrymen remarking at the time, that the probability was that she was not married at all, and had come over at the man's desire, to get the child a settlement in that parish. Before one hour had elapsed, or half the business dispatched, more than two-thirds of the vestry had gone away, saying that they had business of their own to attend to. The cases did not appear to have struck the vestrymen as at all unusual, nor did more than two or three of them take any part in the proceedings. They were not apprised beforehand of my intention of attending, and there was no reason to presume that this meeting afforded any exception to those of usual occurrence. From all that I was able to collect in different places, this is a fair representation of the working of the select vestry system in general. Great difference of opinion is excited as to the management of the parish, while gross attempts at fraud are made by paupers, from the uncertainty of strict investigation, or from the known apathy or expected favour of the persons who fill the office.
Case of woman paying to live in the workhouse.	
Cases before vestry.	
Widow.	
Freeholder.	
Young man and wife.	
Tailor.	
Sick child.	
Irish woman.	
Vestrymen.	
Vestry system.	

OLD SWINFORD.

Employment.	At a distance of 12 miles from Bromsgrove are the parish of Old Swinford and township of Stourbridge. The population is here also engaged in the manufacture of nails. The disorder in which the affairs of the parish (also managed by a select vestry) were found, induced me to select it for the former publication of evidence, as among the most striking that I had occasion to examine. The statement of the vestry clerk was, that men with families were in the habit of being relieved who were known to earn 16 <i>s.</i> or 18 <i>s.</i> a week, and that unless it were shown that the earnings of the family amounted to 25 <i>s.</i> a week, allowance was not refused. This I was hardly able to credit at first, but he stated, that when the trade was good, that people were able to earn these wages, and that it had been considered since that time as a standard for allowance. The character of a large portion of the people was described as being reckless and dissolute beyond belief. They were said to be living almost
Amount of allowance.	
Character of people.	

almost promiscuously, and that large families, legitimate or not, were considered by them as an advantage. Nails are manufactured in their houses, and children who can be employed early in this trade become a source of profit to the parents, if the trade is good, and if it should fail, they are maintained by the parish. A respectable gentleman, well acquainted with the town, stated that many of these women would refuse to marry a man unless she was pregnant. A man had just deserted his family of nine children, who were then all maintained by the parish, and though it was known that he was residing at Merthyr Tydvil, it was, as I was informed, made a question of economy whether he should be pursued and punished or suffered to remain there, the prospect of the charge being the same to the parish.

The workhouse was in a state of great filth and confusion. This was ascribed to the mismanagement of a governor who had recently resigned, and who had for many years filled the office. There were then about 50 inmates of all ages, not classified, and subject apparently to little or no discipline. In one room three men were lying on their beds; two girls, apparently from 12 to 14 years of age, were sitting on the floor. A case of filiation had taken place in the house on that morning.

Upon examining such accounts as could be found, it appeared that 67 bastards were then on the books, and that 700*l.* was due from putative fathers.

From the character which was given to the people living at what was termed the Leigh, in this parish, it appeared evident, that from their violent character, that no person would venture to take an active part in its control. The vestry had been established with some advantage at first, and by vigilance in the distribution of relief, some reduction had been effected, which had enabled the parish to pay off 600*l.* out of a debt of 1,100*l.*; but for some reason which was not stated, their attendance had of late become irregular. In consequence of the state of the parish, a new master of the workhouse had recently been appointed; but the only security provided against imposition by the out-poor in future was the appointment of the person (who had been removed from that situation on account of his age and incapacity), as visitor of the poor, at a salary of 10*s.* a week. The annual expenditure for the poor could not have been less than 2,000*l.*;^{*} annual value 5,514*l.* The effect on population by this encouragement to large families may be seen by the returns:—

In 1801 - - - 3,766 - - - and in 1831 - - - 6,490.

In these districts the truck system has been practised, and doubtless continues to be so, and the owners of the tommy shops, being the manufacturers, are frequently the persons who are expected to regulate the distribution of relief to their own men.

STOURBRIDGE.

The township of Stourbridge, containing a population of 6,148, is situated in the parish of Old Swinford. It affords an instance of the uncertain and fluctuating operation of any system yet provided for the management of the poor. In the year 1817 the poor rates amounted to 3,355*l.* 17*s.*; annual value 5,974*l.* In that year a stipendiary overseer was appointed. He instituted a strict inquiry into the condition of the paupers, whom he found as regular pensioners on the books. By striking off those whom he discovered to have the means of maintaining themselves, he effected a reduction of the rates of 628*l.* in one year, lowering them to 2,727*l.* By continued vigilance the rates were further reduced, and in the year 1823 they amounted to 1,044*l.*

Population, 1811 - - 4,070 - - - in 1821 - - 5,090.

The overseer himself then became engaged in trade, and having other business of his own to attend to, he is said to have become less careful of his duties as overseer. A select vestry was then appointed, whose attendance at first was regular, and the return made of the money expended for the relief of the poor in 1826 was the sum of 1,000*l.* The vestrymen then became less regular, and individuals chiefly attended when their presence was requisite for the relief of some favourite. They were usually persons in trade, and it was said that they were obliged, in giving parish relief, to attend to the request and recommendations of their customers. The rate payers found that the rates were again increasing, being in 1829, 1,304*l.* 16*s.* in consequence of the negligence and jobbing of the select vestry, and at present the poor are managed by overseers annually elected, a governor of a workhouse, who receives a salary, and an open vestry meeting once a month to inspect the accounts. It is said that the open vestry is now more regularly attended than the select vestry had been, but the assistant overseer, who resigned his office, stated, that many of the persons whom he had struck off from the books as unworthy objects of relief, have had their names since replaced. The immorality and recklessness of the people engaged in the manufactories are said to resemble those in the parish of Old Swinford. Average number of bastards 30; loss to the parish 75 per cent. of money not paid by the fathers.

KIDDERMINSTER.

At 10 miles distant from Stourbridge is the borough and parish of Kidderminster. The mode in which the affairs of this large parish have been managed for 30 years past is worthy of attention, as showing the degree to which apathy and neglect may be carried in large districts with regard to the general interests involved in the management of the poor. Upon the

Affiliation in the workhouse.

Bastards.

Vestry irregular.

Parish in debt.

Variation in the rates;

Causes of.

Open vestry.

Character of the people.

Bastardy.

^{*} Besides this, a gentleman in the neighbourhood had lent the overseer 400*l.* to prevent his distraining upon some cottages which were in arrear, which would have greatly added to the burthens of the parish.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

the evidence of the present overseer, during my visit, and from the answers which he has since committed to writing, the annual sum expended on the poor cannot fall short of 10,000*l*. The annual value of the property in 1815 was 13,960*l*; the population in 1831 was 14,981. Nor until the time had arrived when out of 2,826 houses assessed, 525 only could or would pay the poor-rates, was a general vestry assembled, and a committee appointed to inquire into the management of the poor and the expenditure of the money raised for their relief.

This committee made their report on the 6th of April last, and the following extracts will show under what circumstances the administration of the Poor Laws has placed the poor, with a view to their forming habits of prudence and economy.

Report of committee.

The committee, with a view of enabling themselves to judge as to the circumstances and claims of the applicants for parochial relief, attended at the pay-table of the poor on several successive days during the administration of relief by the overseers. The result of their observation there was, a discovery of various instances of imposition. In the first place, individuals not in a situation to entitle them to relief nevertheless applied for and received it. Thus pensioners at 3*s*. 6*d*. per week, and to whom, as such, the standing overseers had thought it right to refuse relief, subsequently received, by virtue of an order of magistrates, 2*s*. 6*d*. a week from the parish, making, with their pensions, 6*s*. a week. Secondly, instances occurred in which the whole amount of relief intended for a family having been given to the head of it, one, two, and, in one case, three members of that family applied for relief for themselves at different hours of the same day, and obtained it. Thirdly, Imposition also to a considerable extent had, it appeared, been effected by persons representing themselves as having no employment, when, on inquiry, it turned out that they were in full work at the time, and that a practice had, in some degree, obtained, of labourers being engaged at one half, or even one-third of the average rate of wages, upon an understanding with their employers that the difference will be made up to them from the parochial rates.

Undeserving objects relieved.

Impositions.

Workhouse.

"The subject that next came under the notice of the committee was, the management and expenditure of the poorhouse; and here they were struck with the allowance made to paupers, amounting to nearly 25 per cent. on their earnings. The committee consider that such premiums are calculated to induce persons to remain in the house when they might find sufficient employment out of it, and, as a further objection, the paupers, who, besides being supplied with food and clothing, receive also their premiums, are thereby placed in a better situation than the independent poor, whose utmost exertions but too often barely suffice to procure for themselves and their families food or clothing, without enabling them to lay by any surplus or premium.

Practice among the inmates.

The committee find, also, that the earnings of the poor have not been regularly accounted for. Their attention was next directed to a practice which appeared to be of long standing amongst the paupers, viz. that of disposing of portions of their food in order to obtain money to spend at the alehouse; that a portion of land contiguous to the poor-house, which had been purchased some years ago, was, notwithstanding the difficulty of employing paupers during the year, to which the inquiries of the committee had been directed, worked with the plough, with the superfluous expense of team-hire, instead of the spade, which would have afforded employment to a considerable number of paupers. A mill for grinding wheat had also been purchased for the poor-house, but that there was good reason to believe that the use of this mill had been attended with considerable loss to the town. One individual, who, by way of experiment, sent to it two large bags of wheat to be ground, states that the quantity of flour produced was much less than from wheat of the same quality ground in the usual way. The committee found that an annual salary was allowed to ——— for overlooking the in-door paupers employed as scavengers. They also find that this duty was not performed by him; also, that private advantages had been made by the governess of the workhouse in keeping fowls and making carpets.

"They are unable to give an accurate account of the cost per head of the paupers in the house, but, according to the best accounts that could be obtained—

House expenses.

"The cost per head for the provisions alone for the year 1830-31

With the addition of clothing and fire

With the addition of extra expenses, after deducting the earnings and various items sold

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Condition of inmates.

Recommendations of Committee.

"This calculation does not include the following items:—

Salaries

Surgeon's salary and medicines

Lunatics' expenses

Burial fees

Blind school

227

67

39

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"Upon questioning the governess as to the admission of paupers into the house, her answer was, that if the parish are under the control of guardians, and they were to examine closely into the circumstances and necessities of the present indoor paupers, the result would be that at least 40 would be turned out.

"As some check to the system here disclosed, the committee beg to recommend that the magistrates be respectfully requested to take into consideration the propriety of not ordering such relief (as above-named.) 2dly. That overseers be requested to deliver the intended relief to the heads only of families. 3dly. That the manufacturers be earnestly requested to inform themselves correctly from time to time as to the necessities of the workmen."

With regard to the workhouse, the committee observe,—

"That experience proves, that although up to a given time men may have been examples of industry and sobriety, yet from being thrown out of work and afterwards associating with the lazy and profligate, they may, and too often do, become eventually similar characters. The committee therefore think it highly desirable, that the indoor paupers should be kept, as far as possible, in regular employment, even though such employment should not be productive of profit; and they hope the parish will adopt measures calculated to enforce such plan.

"But, without intending the slightest reflection on any individual, the committee beg to state, that without an extensive superintendence beyond what any overseer can give, practices of an injurious tendency will from time to time take place, and needless expenditure be incurred, and should the great

proportion

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proportion of the property of the borough, which is at present wholly unproductive, continue so, the committee are decidedly of opinion, that many of those who have hitherto paid rates will be compelled to leave the town, or will become paupers themselves.

"The committee have taken into consideration the propriety of recommending a new assessment, and also an application to Parliament for a Local Act to regulate the affairs of the poor of this borough; but as these measures would cause much delay and expense, they think it best not to advise either until the effect of a select vestry under the 59 Geo. III. has been tried."

(Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Management subsequent to the appointment of select vestry.

Cases.

Parish officers.

Meeting of magistrates.

Opinion of magistrate respecting overseers.

Unsupported by experience.

Management according to written answers.

Paupers' fare.

Employment.

Number receiving weekly relief.

* Vide Birmingham, p. 31.

I visited the town in the middle of the month of September. A select vestry had been appointed in pursuance of this Report. Upon attending the paying of the poor, however, the same abuses as are mentioned in the Report, were observed to take place. Amongst other cases was that of a woman, the wife of a man who having received relief the week before, when in full employment, was compelled to refund the money. She now made a second application, and was relieved. A man who had received 18 s. for grave-digging on the preceding week, applied on this occasion, being Wednesday, for relief, and obtained it; and a woman received 2 s. having received 5 s. for herself on the Saturday preceding. To these cases succeeded numbers of young and able men applying for and receiving small sums of money, many of whom, upon inquiry, were without families and unmarried. The select vestry declined to attend the payment of the poor. No person was appointed to visit at their houses, and ascertain their real condition. The overseer was an upholsterer, and he was only assisted in deciding upon these weekly applications for relief by two collectors, who, with small salaries, had been appointed for the purpose of collecting the full amount of the rates assessed. The borough magistrates held a meeting during my visit, for the purpose of answering the queries circulated by the Board. This meeting I attended, and questioned these gentlemen as to the practicability of a better management in the parish; one of them, an extensive draper, and a large proprietor of small houses, inhabited by the poor, expressed his doubts of the advantage of the select vestry, or of the system being capable of any improvement. These gentlemen were unable to answer any questions connected with the workhouse, but expressed their belief that it was well managed and needed no alteration. Upon visiting this house it appeared to contain about one-half of the inmates that it was capable of holding. The numbers at that time were said to amount to 130, while the house was sufficiently large to lodge nearly 400; the number of paupers relieved out of the house being 903. There appeared to be little classification; the children and the full-grown inmates of both sexes, being observed together in the court; one woman was far advanced in pregnancy, having borne other children in the house. The average expense of their maintenance was said there to be not less than 3 s. 6 d. a head. The magistrate above-mentioned objected to the appointment of permanent overseers, and considered that the tradesmen could manage the parochial affairs; he stated that he was a permanent magistrate, and was always able to attend to the complaints of the poor, if they were oppressed by the overseer. Since my return replies to the town queries have been received from the yearly overseer. In reply to Query 2, How many overseers have you? Have you any assistant?—he states that two annual officers have been doing the duty for the last six months; but finding the business so immensely heavy, as to occupy nearly the whole of their time, they have appointed an assistant overseer to take upon him the principal management of the affairs of the poor.

The present management may be inferred from the following answers:

Are many of the paupers employed in the workhouse?—They are employed in sweeping the streets, and in the domestic work of the establishment.

Is any and what distinction in the fare made to the able-bodied and impotent inmates?—The usual way of feeding them has been as follows: meat and vegetable dinners two days in the week for the whole of them. Working men, meat dinners five days in the week, one day pease soup, and the other day bread and cheese. The breakfast is sometimes broth, sometimes gruel, with milk in it, with half a pound of bread for each man; a strong boy, and women, the same; at their suppers the same quantity of bread, with a proportionate quantity of cheese; there is also good beer allowed at dinner and supper.

Is there a separation of the male from the female inmates?—No separation of the married people.

Have you any and what mode of employing able-bodied paupers out of the workhouse?—None.

Is relief ever and under what circumstances given to able-bodied applicants, without setting them to work?—Yes.

State the numbers, ages, sex and description, and as far as you can ascertain them, the present or former occupation of the poor out of the house?—About 950 receive relief weekly; 200 of these are old persons that cannot earn sufficient to maintain themselves; about 450 are men with families. The remainder are single persons of both sexes; and the two latter classes are persons out of employment in consequence of the badness of trade; the whole of these are usually employed in the manufacturing of carpets and bombazine.

What means are taken to ascertain the real necessities of the applicants?—Inquiry is made of the manufacturers and others by whom they are generally employed.

Is relief given according to any scale?—Man and wife, 2 s. and children 6 d., but not to persons wholly* employed.

Are there many small houses in your parish?—Great many; by far the greatest part.

What class of persons are the usual proprietors?—Manufacturers and persons in business.

Are cottages frequently exempted from rates, and is their rent often paid by the parish?

P. L. (A.)—II.

E 3

More

Appendix (A.)	More than three-fourths of the small houses pay no rates, and the rents of many have been paid by the parish of late owing to the depressed state of the trade. All the dwellings in the borough are assessed, and a great portion of the occupants when summoned plead inability, and consequently are discharged by the magistrates.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	What do you think would be the effect of an enactment enabling parishes to tax themselves, in order to facilitate emigration?—It could not be acted upon in this borough, as at present the poor rates are so extremely heavy upon the tradesmen, that if such an attempt was made it would fail, as there are but 525 poor-rate payers; and the sum raised last year for the relief of the poor was very near 8,000 <i>l</i> .
Condition of rate-payers.	The overseer, in another written reply, says, "Many of the workmen live in houses belonging to their employers, and we consider it owing to their own improvidence in former times that many of them are not now living in their own houses."
Improvidence of poor.	In reply to the query relative to the earnings of an average man. The average earnings of a carpet weaver are stated to amount to 40 <i>l</i> . per year, and a bombazine weaver, to 28 <i>l</i> . per year, and that two children, aged 14 and 11, might earn 16 <i>l</i> . per year.
Wages when trade is good.	When the trade is good, the rate of wages is said to amount to 30 <i>l</i> . a year to the lowest class of workmen; moderate, 43 <i>l</i> .; good workmen, 60 <i>l</i> . and superior, 70 <i>l</i> . per annum: and children, from 8 to 14, from 1 <i>s</i> . 6 <i>d</i> . to 5 <i>s</i> . per week.
Wages at present.	The wages were considerably higher at one time, but carpet weaving has since been carried on in many different parts of the country; and the bombazine trade has also fallen much of late years. Large capitals, however, have been introduced and engaged in the silk factories, giving employment to many hands. Mr. Newcombe, a respectable carpet and bombazine manufacturer, stated, that he was in the habit now of paying from 14 <i>s</i> . to 21 <i>s</i> . a week to his people. Much, therefore, of the distress which occurs in this town, upon the failure of masters or other accidental causes, must arise either from the previous improvidence of the workmen, which leave them destitute upon such occasions, or from the denseness of their numbers compelling them to work for wages which will not enable them to save. In either event the evil may be traced in close connexion with the parochial system. Prudence among the poor would be a miracle, if it occurred under the management disclosed above: And the increase of the population,* exceeding perhaps that of any other place in the kingdom of equal extent, may be referred to the opinion induced among the poor in the neighbourhood of such districts, namely, that employment is either plentiful, or that in the absence of it, a liberal maintenance is provided. Settlements in such parishes are consequently eagerly sought, and when obtained, are reluctantly changed. An accumulation of people on a particular spot is thus encouraged, attended with all the consequences to the property and the poor of redundant population. One-fifth of the inhabitants were said, during my visit, to be non-parishioners, but who probably would soon acquire settlements. The very deceptive test from the condition of particular localities of the general state of the country is here again exposed.
Causes of present actual distress.	On inquiring of persons acquainted with the boroughs of Beudley and Dudley, I learnt that they were, as regarded the poor, in a condition very similar to that of Kidderminster; and throughout all the districts of the same character, I heard a general complaint of the improvidence of the working classes, of increasing poor rates, of unequal assessment, of partiality in the collection of the rate, and constant and general misapplication of the law.
Neighbouring districts.	
WORCESTER	
Local Act.	From Kidderminster I proceeded to the city of Worcester. The poor are here managed under the provisions of a local Act, under which eight parishes are incorporated; they have the common use of a house of industry, subject to the control of a board of directors, who are appointed to hold weekly meetings, and to whom all claims for relief are referred. The governor of the house is expected to make inquiry into the condition of the poor. The cases for relief were said to be decided upon their own merits, as stated before the board. The people are chiefly engaged in the manufacture of gloves, and the trade was, during my visit, described as peculiarly bad, which was referred to the removal of prohibitive duties on foreign manufacture, together with what was especially urged in this city by many most respectable persons, as a cause of the poor being unemployed, namely, the want of an efficient currency, to give circulation to capital. Under these circumstances, a corresponding increase in the rate for the poor might have been expected; on examining the returns, however, I found that the amount of the rates had been, in 1819, 7,042 <i>l</i> .; in 1824, 3,824 <i>l</i> .; in 1828, 4,198 <i>l</i> . and that in the year 1831, the rates were 60 <i>l</i> . below those of the year ending Easter 1830. Upon inquiry into the causes of this reduction, I learnt that it was chiefly owing to the care and attention with which the governor of the house had performed his duty; that he had entered upon office in the year 1819, when the rates were increasing, but that from that time a very general improvement had taken place. Upon examining this person, he stated that he had, by strict inquiry into particular cases, and by general attention to his duties, been enabled to check much imposition, but that he was well aware that many frauds were still committed, and that they were almost beyond his reach to prevent, since persons applied to the directors on the day previously to that
Glove trade.	
Rates diminished.	
Owing to what.	
Governor of workhouse.	

* The ratio is as follows:—

1801	-	-	-	-	6,110		1821	-	-	-	-	10,709
1811	-	-	-	-	8,038		1831	-	-	-	-	14,981

on which he is obliged to relieve them, and that in many cases he was totally unable to make an efficient inquiry into the truth of their statements. He mentioned, as proving the fraudulent attempts that were made to obtain relief by persons able to maintain themselves, that out of a large proportion of families, who from suspicion of their statements he had offered to place in the house, not more than one-third had consented to enter; a house moreover rather remarkable for comfort than strictness of discipline. Three hundred and seventy cases of out-poor are relieved every week; many by a distribution of bread and clothing, which, since the practice had been adopted of stamping with a mark peculiar to the house, had prevented their being sold or exchanged, as was formerly the case, is considered by the governor to have been attended with the greatest advantage, for he says there are a class of paupers to whom an allowance in money is the only inducement for seeking relief.

Dr. —, a medical gentleman who is brought much in connexion with the poor, stated, that notwithstanding the vigilance of the present governor, he considered that the present system of parochial relief almost precluded the possibility of really benefitting the poor; he said that he had observed their uppermost thought whenever they were encouraged to provide for themselves, to be whether it would deprive them of their right upon the parish, and that some appeared to apprehend, that if they made any sacrifice for this purpose, that others would not; and that he knew them to be in the habit of jeering each other for any act of prudence. He also said that he had observed, in the course of his attendance upon them, many creditable instances of attempts to abstain from applications to the parish, but that such instances were becoming daily more rare, and that impositions were constantly attempted upon himself by applications for certificates of sickness, with a view to receiving money from the parish. He said that he considered that the poor were the chief sufferers from their own improvidence, for although the rates were extremely high, yet that early marriages and large families among the poor had the effect, by increasing the numbers, to lower wages. Glove-making is also carried on in all the parishes around Worcester, and many people are employed by the manufacturers who are dependent on the parish, which, of course, must operate to the same effect. Amongst other evils that have arisen from the lowness of wages, has been a deterioration in the character of the work, which has tended to drive the trade to other parts of the country. This is curiously illustrated by a circumstance which he mentioned. In the wages given to the glovers, an allowance is made of so much a week for the silk used in sewing the gloves, which they procure for themselves. With a view of turning this allowance to account, they were in the habit of splitting the silk to make it go further; and the badness of the sewing becoming consequently subject of complaint with the masters in London and elsewhere, they transferred their orders to other places. Dr. —, with a view of showing that his impression of the general dependence of the working people on the rates was not peculiar to himself, showed me the prospectus of a visiting society, which had been established by some benevolent people in the town, in consequence of an inquiry made in expectation of the cholera; the object of which was, first, to become acquainted in future with the real condition of the poor; and secondly, to encourage the poor themselves to contribute to a fund for clothing, and other necessities required in the winter season. In the instructions to the members who are to visit the poor, it is stated, that “it forms no part of the plan of the society to relieve the poor rates; it is therefore incumbent on visitors, to see that the suffering poor have parochial assistance; and in any case where it is withheld, reference should be made to the committee.” Dr. — said, “our object is to benefit the people, and so certain do they feel of obtaining assistance from the parish, that if it was thought to be a substitute for that advantage, they would refuse either to receive any benefit from, or give any support to this society.” He says, “that he observes no indisposition in the poor to save or to be careful of their earnings for particular purposes, but that they are not impressed with the necessity or advantage to themselves, of providing for many of the actual wants of either themselves or their families.” Mr. Henry Newman, a member of the Society of Friends, known in this town for his public spirit and active interest in behalf of the poor, communicated with me on the subject of this inquiry; he said, in mentioning the results of his own observations and general experience upon the subject, that the greatest fault which was committed in the present administration of parish relief, and of other charities, was that of practically teaching the people that they would obtain a larger share of their advantages by early marriages and large families. He had observed the impression to that effect, which prevailed among them, and its very injurious result. He said, that when very early marriages were contracted among the poor, that they occurred among persons who had acquired no habits of prudence and economy, that they became early encumbered with large families, that from being careless and wasteful, they were soon in real distress, and when once induced to apply to the parish, they seldom had the spirit or the wish again to depend upon themselves; and that, according to the ordinary system of dispensing relief, they might often be placed in a better position than if they had been more provident. The charities in this town are, as I was informed, very numerous, and of many different kinds. It is to be feared that they, like the parish funds, do little but relieve distress as it occurs, and that while they do nothing to prevent the great evil of pauperism itself, they do much to corrupt those whose spirit would disincline them to charitable dependence of any kind. If it were possible that a portion of the funds so applied could be devoted to securing to the poor some useful and moral instruction, that licentiousness, which is matter of such general remark in this town, and of annual complaint by

Appendix (A.) the directors of the poor, and of necessity a fertile source of pauperism, might possibly be much diminished.

Reports.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—TEWKESBURY.

C. P. Villiers, Esq. The most important manufacturing town in the northern part of Gloucestershire that I visited was Tewkesbury. The population is chiefly engaged in stocking weaving and the manufacture of lace.

Stocking trade.

In consequence of the stocking trade being carried on in more parts of the country than formerly, and of the great increase in number of the weavers, together with the improvements which have been made in machinery, the profits of the master and the wages of the weaver are both much reduced, and much of the distress which was complained of during my visit was doubtless proceeding from these causes. The Poor Laws, however, have been far from innocuous in their operation in this town. The system of apprenticing children from the neighbouring parishes, for the purpose of changing their settlement, was stated to be one principal cause of the trade being overstocked with hands. The evidence of Mr. Bennett on this subject has already been referred to, in which he described apprentices entering the town in cart-loads. A weaver informed me that an attempt had been made by their class to bring the stockingers within the 5th Elizabeth, by which masters of certain trades were prevented from engaging journeymen who had not served their apprenticeship for seven years.

Mischiefs of the Poor Laws.

Stockingers.

In this, however, they failed, and the masters continued to receive apprentices, with a view, by adding to the number of weavers, of reducing the price of labour. The masters can hardly be blamed for attempting to procure cheap labour; but their facilities for accomplishing this at the expense of the well-being of the operatives, is greatly promoted by the operation of the Poor Laws, since, while the masters can overstock the towns with hands from the country, the operatives in the towns are induced by the laws of settlement to remain on the spot where their wages are falling.

Local Act.

Population.

Expenditure.

Evidence of a weaver.

Wages.

His opinion of the effect of paying wages out of rates.

His character.

Manufacturer.

Weaver as well off as labourer.

Another manufacturer.

His opinion of the effect of low wages.

The poor here are managed under the provisions of a local Act passed in 1792, and the relief is distributed at the discretion of directors, some of whom are annually chosen. The practice is here as elsewhere, to relieve able paupers out of the workhouse, and while in the employment of individuals. The whole population is 3,050; the annual expenditure is upwards of 3,000*l.*, 1,400*l.* of which is spent in what is termed out-door relief. The system appears to be followed by much of the same injustice to the industrious man and encouragement to the idler that is observed in other places. I examined a weaver on the subject, into whose house I entered for the purpose of judging of the condition of his class, and without being directed to or previously known by him. He complained bitterly of the great reduction in wages, and of the numbers that had pressed into the trade. He was working at his loom, having four children also at work in the same business. He stated that he only earned himself 5*s.* 6*d.* a week, and that together with all his family he had hard work sometimes to obtain 12*s.* and he had to pay 1*s.* a week for the frame. I inquired of him if he had ever received assistance from the parish? he replied that he never had, and that as long as it was possible for him to live without it, he never would. He said, however, that he was called a fool by his neighbours, for they said, "since he had a large family, he had a right to relief;" and they, he added, were receiving it to the right and the left of him on this account. He said that his own feelings on the subject prevented his ever applying to the parish, though he had as good a claim as many who received relief. I questioned him as to his opinion of the effect upon wages, of a portion being paid out of the rates by the parish. He said he had no doubt that it would tend, if done to any amount, to reduce them, and to keep them low; but he added, that people who thought that a high rate of profit was the only desirable object did not care for that. He expressed a strong wish that the Government would make some useful change in the Poor Law system, though he said that he feared it was now too late to benefit those engaged in his trade, as their numbers were already so great. This man had taken pains to educate himself, and was very intelligent; he appeared also to stand high in point of character among those to whom he was known. A respectable manufacturer, who was well acquainted with him, said that he knew him to be an honest and industrious man, and that he believed what he stated to be perfectly correct, with respect to his never having received assistance from the parish. This gentleman stated that the wages of the weavers were doubtless much lower than they had been, but that he considered the weaver now to be as well off as the agricultural labourer. He said that they were suffering much from the denseness of their numbers, but that though they had a notion that the masters at Tewkesbury gave lower wages than those at Nottingham, they were still unwilling to leave the town, and when they had alleged their want of means to remove themselves to Nottingham, he had upon more than one occasion offered to defray the expense; this had only been accepted by one man, and after waiting a considerable time without hearing of him, it was found that he had stopped on his way at Warwick, having spent all the money which he had received to settle himself at Nottingham. On conversing with another manufacturer, I found that he regretted the great fall in wages, but said that as a capitalist he had no choice between reducing the wages of his men and giving up his business, for if a certain proportion of the operatives were obliged to take lower wages, the wages of the rest must also fall, since otherwise the master who employed those at reduced wages would get possession of the market. He said that he could always calculate out of a given number of workmen what proportion working at low wages would bring down the rest, and that if any circumstance caused a fall in one district, wages must fall in all other districts producing the same article. He admitted that this would equally be the case if the operatives in any number were relieved by the parish. Upon my inquiring of him as to

to the fact, he said that there was no deliberate practice of paying wages out of the rates in Tewkesbury, but that many did receive parochial relief on account of the size of their families. I asked him, if allowances were made on account of children to men with families, whether it might not induce them to remain longer in the trade when overstocked than it was prudent for them to do; he considered that it would have that effect; he mentioned a recent instance of the men having struck work, and that they had then expected to be maintained by the parish; relief had, however, on this occasion been refused, and they had returned to work. He thought now that the trade had become so bad, and that the parish allowance was so small, that men were not bringing up their children to the same business, and he considered that the evil of redundant numbers in the trade would, if allowed to take its own course, correct itself in this manner. He said that he feared that there was much positive distress, as but few of the men had saved when their earnings were very great a few years since. I may mention one instance of a manner of granting relief in this town, which is far from being calculated to correct the evil which is complained of. A man had applied to the parish on several occasions for relief, and received it; he was at length desired to enter the house, with his wife and family, to which order he submitted, and work was given him as a weaver, in which capacity he had been engaged in France, having then lately returned from that country. He had a separate room for himself and his family, consisting of a wife and several children; one child had been born since his admission to the house, and his wife was again pregnant. The allowance in this house is, meat three days in the week; bread, soup, porridge, cheese, beer, &c. three meals a day; clothing, firing, &c. The governor of the house spoke with pride of the superior quality of the provisions. The house was peculiarly clean and comfortable in all respects, nothing in short appeared to be wanting to make this man satisfied with his condition. He had resided in this manner for two years, displaying to every other weaver the contrast of a parochial provision with an independent maintenance. Mr. Lewis, a manufacturer, stated, that some men with their families did not earn more than 9s. 6d. a week, and that it was impossible, without some assistance, for them to taste meat more than once a week. Such management is extremely important in the midst of a population who are suffering much from a sense of their deterioration, and who, from that circumstance, are naturally more impatient of privation.

I have mentioned these places precisely in the order in which I visited them: having been before totally unacquainted with their circumstances or character. They may, therefore, be taken as a fair sample of the general management of the poor in the manufacturing districts of these counties.

I visited many other towns besides those in which the population are chiefly engaged in manufacture, which, though they did not afford a sufficient illustration of the whole subject to make it useful to report of them in detail, yet each tended to illustrate some point of the inquiry, which was matter of great and general complaint. The following towns are instances of this kind:—

WARWICK.

In the town of Warwick, the parish of St. Mary contains a population of 6,678; and the sum annually raised for the poor, according to the return of 1831, 2,761*l*.

The accounts of this parish had never been regularly inspected for 16 years. It had been nominally managed by a self elected vestry, which expired a short time since from the vacancies not being filled up, and the management had chiefly devolved upon the governor of the workhouse, who being an honest man, had not abused his power. A political feeling has alone occasioned the change that has recently been made; and four overseers, annually elected, have agreed, in turn, to examine the accounts at the end of each quarter. These are chiefly tradespeople, the landlord of an inn being one. But they had no intention of serving for successive years, or is there any reason for supposing, that when the spirit which actuates their zeal at present is abated, that their other avocations will permit of their properly attending to the management of the poor.

Accounts not inspected for 16 years.

ALCESTER.

At Alcester, in the same county, the parish had been managed for many years by an assistant overseer, who, by devoting time and attention to his duties, had effected great reduction in the expenditure, and, according to his own statement, having been a shopkeeper, dealing in articles consumed by the poor, had been completely ruined by the odium which he had thus incurred in the town. He became himself afterwards less careful in his accounts, and it was then considered expedient by the parish to discontinue the office of permanent overseer, and the yearly officer was again intrusted with the management of its affairs. The person who was in office during my visit was an auctioneer, and for the time gave satisfaction; his accounts were kept with more method than by his predecessor. His other business, however, necessarily interfered with the duties of the office; he complained that impositions were constantly being attempted by the poor, and that he was only to hold the office for one year.

Overseer a shopkeeper ruined by doing his duty.

Population in 1831	-	-	-	-	-	2,405
Poor rates 1831	-	-	-	-	-	£. 642

Appendix (A.)

EVESHAM.

Population.
St. Peter.
Principle of management.
Objection to by other rate payers.

St. Lawrence.

All Saints.

This borough includes the three parishes of St. Peter, St. Lawrence and All Saints; population 3,991. The circumstances of this district, as they affect the condition and employment of the poor, are the same; but the management in each parish is different. The parish of St. Peter, called also Bengeworth, has been before referred to as an example of careful and intelligent management by a guardian appointed under the 22d Geo. III. who also united in himself the office of magistrate and surveyor of roads. His principle in the distribution of relief, was simply to award it in such a mode as should afford a strong motive to the poor to be careful of their earnings, and to seek independent employment. I have before referred to the result of his system till the year 1830. He then retired, having, as he stated, found the duties too laborious and extremely unthankful. A person in the town stated that the parish had not been satisfied with his management, "that he kept the paupers too much to himself, and that other people wanted them as well." It was stated also that the pauper labourers were now being sent round to the farmers. In the adjoining parish of St. Lawrence the Guardian Act had also been enforced; but the guardians did not pursue the same system as in St. Peter's. The rates increased, the poor were mismanaged, and the parish was dissatisfied; this result being ascribed to the particular system it was discontinued. When, however, the affairs were again ill managed under the annual overseer, the Guardian Act was resumed and is now in force, but without more prospect of success. The parish is not free from the control of the borough magistrates, which had once been the case with St. Peter; but in that instance the guardian above mentioned being a magistrate himself, had resisted the interference of his colleagues. The adjoining parish of All Saints has always been managed by the annual overseers, and does not appear to have been worse off than St. Lawrence. The expenditure has not varied more, and the same complaints were heard of the many impositions attempted upon the parish.

PERSHORE.

The town of Pershore, in the county of Worcester, includes within it the two parishes of St. Andrew and the Holy Cross.

Population of St. Andrew, 1831	-	-	-	-	2,080
Ditto - - Holy Cross, 1831	-	-	-	-	2,145
Annual value of St. Andrew, 1815	-	-	-	£.	4,426
Ditto - - - Holy Cross, 1815	-	-	-	-	2,518

Effect of Mr. Bushell's management.

Reason for his discontinuing the office of overseer.

Holy Cross. Management.

Common interest of the two parishes.

Various systems sanctioned by Acts of Parliament.

For many years St. Andrew had a poorhouse, governor, guardian and visitors, as provided under the 22d Geo. III., but the mismanagement which occurred during that time induced the parish to revert to the old system of yearly overseers. During the last year the office devolved upon Mr. Bushell, the schoolmaster of the town; he found the affairs in great confusion; debts had been incurred, rates had not been collected, and the modes of granting relief extremely injudicious; by his intelligent management, and improved method of keeping and publishing the accounts, a large debt had been paid off, debts due to the parish recovered, and, by his own showing, as well as in the opinion of some of the rate payers, he was fast redeeming the parish; he found, however, that the duty was arduous and unthankful, and that it interfered with his other business; and he stated, that he should not be able to perform the office during another year.

The adjoining parish professed to be managed under the Guardian Act. A workhouse had been erected, and the usual officers appointed; but it appeared upon inquiry, that the whole duty devolved upon a man that was called the permanent overseer, who, in the words of one of the officers who are annually chosen, "received all and paid all." This man was in London, and no person could say when he would return, and the character which he bore in the town was that of being drunken and sometimes oppressive; his books could no where be found, and the affairs of the parish were apparently in great disorder. There is much land in this parish, and it was said that though he might suit the farmers, as he paid the wages out of the rates, yet that he was indiscriminate in his treatment of cases, whether of real distress or of fraud.

Beyond their names, there is not a circumstance properly to distinguish these different parts of the same town. Every interest belonging to one locality is common to both. The houses belonging to the two parishes are interspersed. One street runs through them; one house belonging to one proprietor may be partly in one parish and partly in another, yet the poor are subjected to a perfectly different treatment in each. Their funds are very differently applied, and the annual value of the least populous parish is nearly double that of the other.

Thus, in every division of these counties, independently of the capricious management of individuals, there may be found as many different systems as there are Acts of Parliament which permit their adoption. The parochial management may be regulated according to the provision of the 43d Eliz. simply, or of the 9th Geo. I. or of the 22d Geo. III. or the 59th Geo. III. or of some private or local Act, and each of these systems may have been established or be continued, with little reference to the circumstances for which they are suited, and may succeed or fail, according to the particular character of the individual who may happen for the time being to administer them.

DEVONSHIRE.—(Northern Division.)

The Northern Division of Devon differs in general character and in circumstance from the midland counties; it is an extensive agricultural district, having once been the seat of woollen and other manufactures.

Serge

Serge and lace are still manufactured in some of the principal towns, and a portion of the people in the agricultural parishes receive work from manufacturers residing in different parts of the county, and weave at their own houses. A branch of the glove trade also has been removed from Worcester to Torrington, where work is distributed to the people in the neighbourhood, and orders executed for masters in London. The great body of the people may nevertheless be said to depend upon agricultural employment. An opportunity for inquiring into the operation of the Poor Laws was afforded me in a circuit to revise the Lists of Voters, and my information was chiefly derived from the parish officers and other persons who attended the courts.

The relief is distributed upon the same principle as in the other counties, and the objectionable modes of applying the law are perhaps more uniformly adopted. The parochial houses are used for little else than lodgings; the inmates are sometimes clothed, and in some of the principal towns, viz. Barnstaple, South Moulton, Tiverton, and Crediton, the poor are fed as well as lodged in the workhouse. Some of the aged and infirm also receive small sums of money at their own houses, or in houses belonging to or for which the rent is paid by the parish. The sums allowed to them for this purpose vary from 1s. to 2s. 6d.; infant and unprotected children are placed out with parishioners, who receive a small sum for their maintenance, until they reach the age of nine years, when they are apprenticed to the rate-payers, who are bound to receive a number varying with the amount of their assessment, and are subjected to a fine upon refusal. The parochial houses above named were in far worse condition than those in the other counties, smaller, and in appearance less orderly; but the dislike to enter them upon the part of the poor, and the desire for their more general establishment, under proper control, on the part of the rate-payers, are equally strong. Little inquiry is ever instituted into the ability of people to maintain their relations. The overseers consider it useless, since an appeal would be carried to the magistrates at their sessions, and the appellants supported in their refusal to contribute to their maintenance. A case arose lately at North Tawton, (a considerable parish,) which was so glaring, that the overseer determined to resist the application of the pauper, and obeyed the summons to the magistrate, by which his refusal to relieve was instantly followed. The overseer fully established the power of the relations to support the pauper; the bench, however, expressed a doubt in what way to act, and at length decided that the relation should contribute a portion not greater than one-half of the sum necessary for the support of the pauper, and the parish should pay the remainder. "And it is to this decision," said the overseer, "that the parish must look to in future, and not the statute to learn its liability." A strong motive which the law supplies to the poor to provide for themselves, in order to avoid depending upon their relations, is of necessity much weakened by such misapplication of the law.

The mode in which the able-bodied are relieved in this county, is chiefly in allowances of money for children, and what is called "the billet system," is practised very generally throughout the whole division; it is denied in some places, from a notion of its unpopularity, but in many others it was openly admitted, and much more so than the roundsman system in the other counties.

The allowance for children is granted, operating as a direct bounty upon population, and the practice is so general and confirmed, that the pauper is in the habit of giving formal notice to the overseer of the pregnancy of his wife. Should the overseer refuse the application for the fixed sum allowed for the second, third or fourth child, the magistrates' single inquiry, on his appearance before them under a summons, would be as to the custom of the parish or the hundred; "At what number does allowance begin with you?" is the common mode of putting the question, as I was repeatedly assured by overseers. The previous or the present earnings of the pauper, or of any of his family, are never mentioned. The only check which appears to exist to the grossest abuse under this system is the custom which is universal in the county of the compulsory apprenticeship of any child belonging to a family receiving parish relief having reached its ninth year, and the rule is said to be very strict of withholding parish pay to the parents if they object to the child being bound. The propriety of this system is a great question in the county, and a complete change in the system of maintaining the poor not being contemplated, is still under discussion. Those who object to its continuance found their objection either upon the disapproval of the apprentices themselves, or upon its being repugnant to the spirit of English institutions, in placing too much power in the hands of one person over another, which might at times be abused, and that a desire to be released from the mutual obligation was frequently the occasion of misconduct in the apprentice or maltreatment by the master. Those, however, who approve of the system, appeal to the general experience of its effects, and consider that the misconduct which at times takes place either in the master or apprentice might equally occur under the circumstances of any other service, and that this mode of binding the children of paupers is not peculiarly calculated to prejudice their conduct as servants. As a proof that the farmers approve of the system with the view to getting good and useful servants, it was stated to be a common practice among them to take a child out of some family that was chargeable two years before the time (viz. at seven years old) in order that they might form or improve its disposition before it had lived too long under other circumstances.

It is also said in its favour, that apprentices who have been so bound to farmers are certain of obtaining situations when their time expires, from the confidence which the other farmers feel in their understanding the business of husbandry. The contrast in this respect in their favour with other labourers is notorious in Devonshire. If the masters have a bad name, the magistrates refuse to sanction the binding of the child; but the farmers approving of the system are careful in avoiding the reputation of maltreating their apprentices; if an instance

Principle of distribution, in awarding relief.

Parochial houses, Condition.

Inquiry seldom made into the ability of children to support parents.

Case in which it was attempted.

Effect of.

Relief of able-bodied.
Allowance.
Billet system.

Effect of Allowance.

General practice.

Compulsory apprenticeship.

Question considered.
Objections.

Arguments in favour of.

Results favourable to poor.

Appendix (A.)	of this kind was known in a parish, many of the paupers would withhold their applications for relief until the turn of such particular rate-payer to receive apprentices had passed. Upon examining some poor people in the parish of Sandford on this subject, they admitted that though "it was a long time to serve an apprenticeship, it was a good thing for the children when their time was out, as they were known to be fit for something, and sure of getting situations." Upon the whole, therefore, considering the circumstances under which this rule is enforced, namely, a previous dependence on the parish for support, and that it operates as a check to one among the greatest evils of the present administration of the law, that of the poor multiplying their numbers and keeping their children at home with a view to increase their allowance, and considering also the results with which it is said commonly to be attended, the reasons under the present system appear to preponderate in its favour.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Conclusion in favour of.	With all the people with whom I conversed in the county, no dissentient opinion was expressed as to the evil effects on the labourers of the billet or ticket system. An intelligent farmer, who had owned and occupied land in the neighbourhood of North Tawton for 50 years, informed me that he had witnessed the gradual deterioration in the character of the labourers, and that he considered that it was principally owing to the practice of compelling them to receive their wages out of the rates, and to the foolish spirit in which the Poor Laws had been generally administered for 30 years past. He confirmed the statements everywhere made to me respecting the aversion formerly entertained by the labourers to receiving parish relief, and considered that the different feeling which now exists among them, had, by augmenting the burthens of the landlord, led to the discontinuance of a practice which formerly prevailed throughout the county, and was extremely advantageous to the labourers, namely, their living in the house with the farmers. The farmer, he said, was now obliged to consider in what way he could alleviate for himself the burthen of the rate, and often employed men merely to prevent their becoming chargeable to the parish. The origin in this county of the practice of confounding wages with relief was referred to a later date than it had been in the other counties. A very frequent reference was made to the provisions of the Militia Act compelling parishes to maintain the wives and children of men during their service as one of the many circumstances which had taught the people to overcome their pride in avoiding parochial dependence. Mr. Pearce, a solicitor and town clerk of South Molton, resident all his life in this county, expressed his opinion to this effect, and mentioned a striking instance of a respectable man, whose wife, during his service as serjeant in the North Devon Militia, having received money from the parish, had, by contracting wasteful and careless habits during that time, become, with her husband, paupers for the rest of their lives.
Effect of billet system.	
Feeling formerly entertained by labourers.	
Militia Act, effects of.	
Case.	
Scale system, date of.	The scale system, however, adopted in other counties, was speedily followed in Devon, and it has been in full operation since the year 1801. A redundancy of people, which might have been expected in this county, from the operation of the Poor Laws, the removal of the manufactures, and the influence of low prices, in throwing poor lands out of cultivation, has been in great measure checked by fresh employment in making and repairing roads throughout this county, by emigration also by some portion of the people having followed the manufactures to the North; and though there are several instances at present of redundancy, with regard to the capital of particular parishes, yet there is little evidence of this being the case generally throughout the division. The more correct conclusion, from the facts which are to be collected in this district, is only confirmatory of what has been observed before, that the amount of pauperism depends upon the encouragement which is held out to the poor, by the mode of applying the Poor Law, either to be provident or dependant. Pauperism appears to be less accounted for by public distress than by any other circumstance to which it is ever referred. There are many facts which tend to show this to be the case; for instance, in some parishes no relief at all is given to the able-bodied labourers, and the reason assigned is, that the men are in full employment, being barely sufficient for the labour of the parish, as at Bishop Tawton. Mr. Fuge, a gentleman residing in that parish, who has written several works on road-making, and has had occasion to consider the expenses of labour, stated, that there was not a man in his neighbourhood to spare from the cultivation of the land. In some parishes the allowance system has been discontinued altogether, without any change in the proportions of capital and labour, and in one place its discontinuance was ascribed simply to the appointment and subsequent good management of a permanent overseer. At Ilfracombe, an intelligent man who filled this office, informed me that he had completely abolished the system, although it had previously existed to a great extent, chiefly by uniting in himself the joint offices of overseer and waywarden. This enabled him to provide every applicant for relief immediately with work. He made it a rule only to pay such wages for work done for the parish as should fall below those of the district, and superintended the work himself. He found that 2d. a day less by the parish than what was given by private persons was sufficient to prevent all such applications being made to him.*
General redundancy checked by accidental causes.	
Great cause of pauperism; not public distress.	
Facts in support of this view.	
Bishop Tawton.	
Allowance system discontinued at Ilfracombe.	
Means by which.	

* As showing the importance of this arrangement, he stated, that during the riots at the end of the year 1830, a body of the labourers in this parish marched in order to the petty sessions which the magistrates were holding, to require them to compel him to raise the wages that he paid for work on the roads to the level of farmer's wages. He said, that he then explained to the magistrates the object of his plan, and told them, that if he was not suffered to continue it, the whole parish would be pauperized within half a year. The justices in this case attended to his representation and refused to interfere. Not a single able-bodied man has been relieved since that time, and they are all in the employment of the farmers; the rate of wages being 1s. 4d. per diem, with an allowance for beer or cider. The overseer bore

In parishes where this system was not adopted, high poor rates and surplus people are much complained of. In the parish of Hartland, Mr. —, —, who had occupied land there for 17 years, informed me that the magistrates were in the habit of ordering the same wages for the men working on the roads, and not superintended, as were paid to the labourers in the employ of the farmers, and that on this account as well as that the poor liked to watch for the wrecks in the winter, they did not seek for work out of the parish. The pressure of the rates has been so severe here, that it has been thought worth while to defray the expenses of nearly 100 persons going to Upper Canada. The overseer at Southmolton states, in his written replies, that he has 18 men working on the roads, and that not one of them need be out of employment if they were fit for husbandry work, but that they were men who had been hanging about the parish all their lives, and had learnt nothing, and that nobody would employ them. Mr. Durant, at North Tawton, said that he had frequently men who came to him in the middle of the day to apply for work; that he always offered them work by the piece, and they usually left him on the day following. In the parish of North Molton, the billet system and pauperism in other shapes prevail to a great extent; the average expenditure on the poor is nearly 100 *l.* a month, and the property assessed 3,957 *l.* The overseer stated, that many of the labourers who were supported during the winter by the parish, were in the habit of going for two months during the summer into Somersetshire, and other counties, leaving their families chargeable, and obtaining work at good wages, of which no account was rendered when they applied for relief. The same thing was stated in the parish of Thorverton, by Mr. Babbage, the permanent overseer, who mentioned also that labourers from Wiltshire, where so much pauperism prevails, were in the habit of coming to that parish, and earning during the summer from 15 *s.* to 1 *l.* a week, and that they were not unusually seen to be lying drunk in the roads before they left the county. He also mentioned instances where successive generations of the same family have been without interval dependent upon the parish for upwards of 200 years, others for 150 years, and so on.* At North Tawton, Mr. Chapple, the overseer, a gentleman well informed as to the state of the whole division, says, that good labourers can always find employment; but that many refuse to be hired by the year, liking an unsteady life, knowing that they can always come upon the parish when they please. The overseer at Pilton states, that the persons usually applying for relief are masons and other workmen, who have earned high wages during the greater part of the year. In the parish of Bow, having observed that for some years, previous to 1829, the rates had diminished, while the population had increased, I purposely visited that place to ascertain the cause; I found that the rates had again been augmenting, and the person to whom I applied told me he was not the overseer, but that he acted for a gentleman who had been appointed, and he could afford me no information on the subject. Upon referring to Mr. Chapple, who had land in this parish, he informed me that the reduction in the rates above alluded to, was entirely to be attributed to the care and vigilance of a person residing in the parish, who performed the duties of overseer for several successive years. He said, that within the last three years he had discontinued the office, owing to the arduous nature of its duties, and that the expenditure was now again increasing from want of care. These facts, which are only a sample of those which might be collected whenever inquiry is made, sufficiently prove that the amount of the poor rates is no fair indication of the distress which either does or need exist in the present state of the country.

Wherever the rates have been misapplied, the influence upon the habits of the poor was described to have been the same in this county as in the others. The reckless spirit with which the poor contract their marriages, as a new feature in their character, was the subject of universal remark, and from its tendency to multiply population in particular spots, it is now lamented by some of the poor themselves. On examining a labourer at Holsworthy, in this division, he said that he was only receiving 4 *s.* a week from the parish for his work upon the roads; but that he did not complain of the smallness of the allowance, since he knew what numbers there were then depending on the parish. Upon asking him to what he attributed this increase of number, he replied, that the reason was evident, "since," to use his expression, "the young folks married up so terrible early in these days." On asking him if he could account for this, he said, "that many of them thought they should be better off if they were married than if they were single, and get more regular employment from the farmers." He said that he was 68 years of age, and that he remembered a very different state of things; that "when he was a young man the farmers preferred a man who was single to a married man, and that he was used to live in the house with them; that men didn't use to marry till they had got a character as good workmen, and had put by some of their earnings;" and that "if any man applied to the parish, he was pointed at by all who knew him as a *parish bird*; but that it was very different now." He also added, that "they were much encouraged to marry early by having the means in that parish of building cottages upon the waste, paying only a sham rent to the lord of the manor."† This statement was confirmed by Mr. Cock, the solicitor, residing in this town.

Holsworthy

bore testimony to the excellence of their conduct and disposition since that time; this person appeared to be a man of great firmness and sagacity, and expressed his conviction that if this system were steadily pursued throughout the country, it would be attended with the same results.

* Mr. Babbage mentioned these cases as striking illustrations of what he has invariably observed, namely, that paupers generate paupers.

† Lord Stanhope. This must be considered as some qualification of the advantages which are said to have been derived from the allotment system adopted by his Lordship in this parish.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Holsworthy.

Character of,

Emigration.

* See p. 80.

Rate of Wages in
the division.

Holsworthy is situate in a remote part of this division, within 10 miles of the sea. Much of the land was brought into cultivation during the war, and the fall of prices barely admits of its being retained in occupation. It is probably one of a class of parishes that would receive immediate attention under a general system of superintendence in the management of the poor. The facilities of intercourse with more fertile parts of the county are not great; the people are greatly redundant, and each year the property, under the present system, must be expected to become more encumbered, as each year the poor multiply in number, and becoming more impoverished, they become more reckless. The poor here ought to be encouraged to seek work out of the parish, or, for the sake of immediately relieving the parish, perhaps some facilities should be afforded for emigration: this has, indeed, already taken place in a slight degree, and there is no prejudice among the poor against it. Some encouragement had been lately given to it, by a letter addressed to one of the inhabitants by a dissenting clergyman, a parishioner, who had settled in Upper Canada, extracts from which I have appended to this Report.* Notwithstanding that there are other parishes in this county which are in the same condition as Holsworthy, the average rate of wages which may be earned by every able and willing labourer, does not appear to have fallen below that upon which he may maintain himself independently, and also save a portion of his earnings. The evidence which I procured on the subject of wages agrees in fixing those earned by a labourer at 7s. per week, with an allowance for drink amounting to 4d. a day, or the weekly sum of 8s. 6d. or 9s. work by the piece, enabling the man to earn 11s. or 12s. a week. The cost of living being so far cheaper here than in the midland counties, the real difference in the rate of wages is but slight. Mr. Coates, the overseer of Ilfracombe above alluded to, is also the agent for the Exeter savings bank. In answer to the question whether a family could lay by any thing, and how much? he states that he often receives deposits from husbandry labourers not receiving more than 7s. or 8s. per week, and having a wife and one, two or three children, of annually from 1l. to 4l. He states the rate of wages of other classes in the following order:

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Masons - - -	12	-	Painters - - -	15	-
Carpenters - -	14	-	Woolcombers - -	20	-
Gardeners - - -	12	-			

Deposits of agri-
cultural labourers.

† See p. 44.

North Devon
Provident Insti-
tution.Secretary's
evidence.

Benefit societies.

Towns.

Tiverton and Cre-
diton.Contrast of con-
dition under differ-
ent management.

He adds, that he scarcely ever receives deposits from any of these classes, and remarks, that the wives and families of mechanics, &c. are "less comfortable" than those of the husbandry labourer, and that the former are much more addicted to drinking than the others. The deposits made by the agricultural labourers in Devonshire, at the Exeter savings bank, amounted in 1832 to 74,182l.; agricultural children, 54,787l. It is satisfactory to connect this evidence of the capabilities of the labourers to maintain themselves, with the statement of the overseer of Ilfracombe,† since it appears that these savings are made in parishes where, by better management, the labourers have ceased to be paupers. There is in this division of the county another institution, formed upon a principle similar to that expounded in the Lords' Committee by Mr. Becher, of Southwell, and styled the North Devon Provident Institution. It has now been established five years. It is equally for assurance against sickness and old age, as for securing the payment of given sums at stated periods. The secretary states that the contributions of the labourers have increased each year since it has been established, and that it is becoming very popular amongst that class of poor who still wish to avoid depending upon the parish. From his acquaintance with the habits of the poor, he states his opinion, that it is far more their natural inclination to be careful and provident than the contrary, and that with very little encouragement they would eagerly contribute a portion of their earnings to an institution of this character; but that many are deterred at present from making any sacrifice of this kind, from observing others better off than themselves who live on the parish. The benefit and friendly societies still exist in the greater proportion of parishes, some of which, however, having lasted nearly 60 years, are now about to be dissolved, as at Torrington: they are in great part supported by the labourers. It is thought expedient in many parishes to make no difference on this account in the amount of relief granted to any member. I was informed by several overseers, that if this rule was not adopted, the poor would immediately cease to belong to them.

The misapplication of the Poor Laws is not less striking in the towns than in the rural parishes of this division. Amongst those which I examined, were Tiverton, Barnstaple, South Molton, Torrington, Crediton and Collumpton. The towns of Tiverton and Crediton may be contrasted together, as illustrating, in a very striking manner, the influence of parish management in preventing or promoting pauperism, independently of the circumstances which ought to regulate the condition of the poor. In Tiverton, a large manufacturing capital has been introduced, employed in the lace trade. There are many old and wealthy families settled in the town; there are besides no less than between 40 and 50 distinct charities, expressly for the benefit of the poor, some yielding 300l. a year, others 100l., some consisting of houses with a weekly provision for the inmates, some for a weekly distribution of food, and others for clothes. At Crediton, the woollen manufacturers have left the town, and there has been no other introduced; few rich people live in the town, and the charities do not approach, either in number or value, to those at Tiverton. The affairs of the poor at Tiverton are managed by a select vestry, which is ill-attended; a vestry clerk without a salary, and overseers who never serve in successive years. At Crediton, the same matters are conducted by an overseer who has a salary, and who has filled the office for 19 years. At Tiverton, the poor rates in 1821 reached the amount of 7,344l. (population 8,557), reduced by the select vestry when first appointed and they attended to the business, to 5,000l., but now, being irregular, the rates are fast increasing, and exceed at present 6,000l. a year.

a year. At Crediton, the rates have been reduced from 7,000 *l.* to 4,000 *l.* since the manufactures have left the town. At Tiverton the duty of overseer chiefly devolves upon the vestry clerk, because, as it was stated, no other person had time to attend to it; the question arose before me as Revising Barrister in the Borough, as to whether the lists of voters had been prepared by the overseer, and if the claims had been delivered to him; upon which the evidence was as follows: That such claims had been given to one of the overseers' wives, and she had received them because her husband was engaged, that she had given them over to the vestry clerk because he was in the habit of doing what the overseer had not time to do. The lists of voters were also made out by the same person for the same reason. This appeared to be matter of no surprise to any person, it being asked how it was to be expected that a tradesman, having his own business to attend to, could spare the time to perform duties for which he was ill qualified, and not remunerated. At Crediton, the overseer states, that notwithstanding the great employment which the manufactures afforded to the people during the first few years of his appointment, that the rates were extremely high, and were increasing, owing, as he says, to the constant interference of persons in the town in favour of some of the poor, who had made interest with them. But at present, he says, being well acquainted with the character, habits and persons of the poor in the parish, and having for some years past acquired the confidence of the rate payers, he is trusted with the exclusive management of the poor, and he now attends to no recommendation unless he is satisfied that it deserves attention, and relieves no able men without exacting work in return. He expressed himself assured, however, that the pauperism of the town might be doubled again within a very short time, if the distribution of relief was left to the discretion of a number of persons without experience having local interests and business of their own to attend to. With all his vigilance, he says, that he is unable to prevent many frauds from being committed, and that frequent attempts, for instance, are made to obtain relief without labour, by feigning sickness; he had no doubt that the rates were still much higher than they need be, if a fair test could be applied to the condition of many of the applicants. The vestry clerk at Tiverton states, that none of the poor consider themselves without a chance of getting something by applying to the vestry, and that many attended at the meeting for the purpose without a shadow of pretext for their claims; and, as a means of saving the parish, he strongly recommends that the vestry should only meet once a month, instead of every fortnight as at present. An imposition which is commonly attempted here by the out-poor in the neighbouring villages, illustrates the impolicy of not requiring work in exchange for relief; when employed by the manufacturers who reside in different parts of the county, they state, when applying for relief, that they only receive work by which they can earn an amount of wages short of that allowed by the magistrates' scale. They sometimes produce a certificate to this effect from some of the masters; but it is possible for them to take work from different masters, whereby their earnings may be sufficient, and yet the amount is difficult to be ascertained, and frauds of this kind the vestry clerk had little doubt were often practised. As showing the mistaken notion which exists here as to the real object of the public provision, it was stated, that on a recent occasion, that the people employed in the lace factories struck work for higher wages, and applied to the parish for relief, and the relief was immediately granted; owing, however, to their great numbers, the allowance was extremely limited, and therefore they returned to their work.

The influence of this management, together with the charitable endowments which exist here, appear to threaten the property of the parish with ruin. The support of numerous families encourages the increase of population by early marriage and bastardy; and from the reputation which the place has acquired of being a *good parish*, it attracts to it people from other parts, and prevents their own parishioners from changing their settlements. The population in 1811 was 6,732; in 1821, 8,651; and in 1831, 9,766; showing an increase in the population of almost 50 per cent.; whereas at Crediton, where a stricter system prevails, the population in 1811 was 5,178; in 1821, 5,515; and in 1831, 5,922; showing in the course of 20 years an addition of 16 per cent., an increase, however, which has been attended by a reduction of the rate, as has been shown above. The practice of paying the wages of manufacturers out of the rates in this division is strongly illustrated in the case of Collumpton, at a short distance from Tiverton, where the weaving of serge and cloth is carried on by two manufacturers, on whose employment many of the poor in that town have chiefly depended for support: one of these manufacturers however receives at present regular annual payments from the parishes in the neighbourhood to employ their paupers, the sums paid being less than the cost of their support by the parishes. The same system is not, however, adopted by the parish of Collumpton. The result, therefore, with regard to the poor at large, is not to diminish the amount of pauperism, but to change its locality, for the first effect of such a measure was to increase the number of persons unemployed at Collumpton, and consequently to reduce wages; it was operating also with injustice to the other manufacturer, for he did not approve of the system and would not adopt it, and indeed had he been willing to do so he would have hardly ventured upon it, for fear of causing a disturbance in the town, by which he might suffer. To attempt to bolster up the evil of a trade being overstocked with hands by such means is only to perpetuate the misery and distress which it occasions, and postpones but for a short period the remedy which is alone applicable of assisting and encouraging the people to procure some different employment, and of relieving the market from the surplus hands. It is to be feared that many of the devices to which parishes resort tend to deter the operatives from taking measures to prevent their numbers exceeding the demand for their labour, which, however, though it may be difficult to account for the exception, are actually adopted in some trades at present; for instance, in this town the wool-combers never suffer a man under the rules of their combination to bring up more than

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Evidence before revising barrister.

Evidence of overseer at Crediton.

Vestry Clerk at Tiverton.

Frauds by out-poor.

Influence of Management upon Tiverton.

Population.

Population of Crediton.

Collumpton.

Manufacturers wages paid out of rates.

Effect of the system.

Practice among Woolcombers to prevent redundant numbers in the trade.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Select vestry, permanent overseer, workhouse.

Cases illustrative of management.

Expenditure.

South Molton.

Overseer's evidence.

Difficulty of enforcing the law.

Bastardy.

Allowance.

Advice of magistrates.

Scale.

Capital.

Character of witness.

than two of his children to the same trade, simply under an apprehension that by increasing their numbers that their wages would fall; but the weavers, not having shown the same sagacity, have overstocked the trade, and now depend upon their parishes for keeping them in the same employment.

BARNSTAPLE.

The system which has been adopted in some places with success, namely, a select vestry, a permanent overseer, and a workhouse, is established in this town. The following cases, however, which occurred during the revision of the lists of voters for that borough, show that they can exist without affording any effectual security against fraud and mismanagement. An objection was taken to a man's vote on the ground of his having received parochial relief. The man swore that he had never received a farthing from the parish; the books were produced, and his name appeared as having received certain sums on two different occasions. The overseer swore that he had relieved his wife, and believed it to be for him; he produced an order from one of the annual overseers to pay the money to the woman. The man again swore that he was perfectly ignorant of the application having been made, and proved satisfactorily that he was in good work at the time, and in no need of assistance. In another instance a man swore that he was not aware that his wife was receiving relief, when he was reminded by the assistant overseer, who keeps a shop dealing in bread, that he had trusted him for a loaf on the credit of his wife's weekly allowance, out of which the money was agreed to be stopped the following day. In another case the man's vote was disallowed, upon its being shown that he was acquainted with the application which had been made by his lodger, who had received relief, purporting to be for him. Several other cases occurred on this occasion, which, as they did not appear to strike any person as the least unusual, may be taken as evidence of the general management of the parish. The expenditure on the poor nearly amounts to 2,000*l.* a year; * annual value, 11,278*l.* There are two large lace manufactories, employing some hundreds of hands, and a place of considerable resort for persons of small fortune.

SOUTH MOLTON.

The town of South Molton, 12 miles from Barnstaple, is considered the capital town of this division. The population is 3,826; the annual value, 9,906*l.* It is governed by a corporation consisting of eight persons, elected for life, vacancies being filled up by the survivors, who serve the office of mayor in rotation. The magistrates have Poor Law jurisdiction, and consist of the mayor and those members of the corporation who have served as mayor the two preceding years. An assistant overseer has been appointed by the town; four other overseers are appointed, who are chiefly tradespeople, who seldom serve in successive years. A workhouse, containing 27 inmates, mostly infirm and old.

In questioning the assistant overseer as to the means taken to ascertain whether the aged poor applying for relief have children able to maintain them, he stated, "they had several poor in and out of the house, who ought to be maintained by their children, who are persons in business. That those who held the office of overseer had great difficulty in putting the law in force, for the magistrates are all doctors, and the persons who neglect to provide for their parents are their patients." Upon inquiring of him if the law is usually enforced against the parents of bastard children, he considers, in his answer, that the same difficulty exists in this case from the circumstance that the magistrate may be the medical attendant of the father or mother, and he adds, "I do not recollect the law ever having been put in force against the woman, or the man, and the maintenance of the child falls on the parish." To the question of whether able-bodied labourers, in the employment of individuals, receive allowance or relief from the parish? he said, "A great many labourers receive relief on account of their families; they marry so young, and their families increase so fast, their earnings are hardly sufficient for their support." In answer to whether this relief was given upon the order or advice of the magistrates, he says again, "that the men either apply to the magistrates themselves, or through their patients, and that they are sure of having it granted." "In some instances," he says, "I have been obliged to relieve a pauper actually living out of the parish, because the magistrates did not like to refuse the favour to some friend who writes and makes interest for the pauper." To the question, Whether relief is given according to any scale? he answers "When they have the second child, they have the parish doctor, and the delivery is charged to the parish, with some relief; at the third they have standing pay, the doctor is most likely the mayor, or one of the magistrates." He further says, that he has attempted in many cases to discontinue the relief to paupers, by comparing their earnings with the condition of a great many rate-payers whose circumstances are much worse than the receivers, but that this has cost him many hard-fought battles, both with paupers and magistrates. The same person being questioned as to the state of capital in his neighbourhood, as affected by the administration of the Poor Laws? says, "The Poor Laws are here beginning to be dreaded as bad as a pestilence; the new rate which was made two years since will be a great injury to our trade. It presses heavily on houses; I know many have sold their property, and put their money into the funds, because there are no rates on funded property." The witness here is a respectable tradesman, living in South Molton, who has undertaken the superintendence of the poor for an annual salary of 40*l.* He mentioned to me many cases

* This place is at times much infested with vagrants; their numbers, however, depend precisely upon the mode in which they are treated; during one year the mayor sent every vagrant to prison, on one of whom was found a book, describing the value of the town to vagrants if "well begged." They did not appear again for some years afterwards in this town, but the mayor was recognized and insulted by some of them when he was in London.

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cases showing the impossibility of doing justice to the parish, under the control to which he is subject; one case was that of a son and daughter, both being in comparatively affluent circumstances, suffering their father to remain in the workhouse, and as having resisted every application to contribute to his maintenance; of also a woman having a son who received good wages being allowed to have the use of a house, to exact regular weekly relief, and to persist in refusing to enter the workhouse. Another case he mentioned of a man having a good property in a house and furniture, and the means of living independently, and who, under the notion that others were better off on the parish than himself, granted a power of sale to another man of all his goods for the purpose of claiming relief from the parish; and though the transaction is believed to have been fraudulent, and accomplished with this view, he has been allowed to receive relief ever since. Many other cases of this character were mentioned by him, and he spoke of himself as nearly helpless, from the constant interference of some persons in the town, either to serve their own interest or that of their friends.

The case of South Molton is worth consideration with the view to the amendments of the system that may be in contemplation, since it illustrates in a very striking manner, the inexpediency of entrusting the administration of the laws affecting the poor to persons, however well qualified as regards their property and station, without the more essential qualification of local independence, experience and responsibility, and it would perhaps be unnecessary to look further than to the town and parish of South Molton and the parish of North Molton, one of the most extensive agricultural parishes in North Devon, within only two miles of each other, to show the danger and impolicy of entrusting to local arrangement the important and difficult business of providing for the unemployed poor.

The parish of North Molton, though comprising an extent of 17,000 acres, and whose population bears a proportion of little more than of one person to every ten acres, has amongst its paupers some of the ablest and stoutest of the labourers. They have been receiving throughout this winter, in consequence of an arrangement made between the farmers and the vestry, 7d. a day from the former, the parish paying a like sum of 7d. the remainder of the wages. An agreement, which was made in consequence of these same men having been sent back to the overseer by the farmers upon whom they had been billeted, saying that they were unable to employ them; but the overseer of South Molton, whose statements I have quoted in answer to the query as to the number of labourers necessary for the cultivation of the land contained in the paper of queries, states as a fact, that not a single good agricultural labourer need be in want of work; that more could be employed if they were capable and willing to work; but when he employed them upon the road, it was because they were not of this description. Thus are two of the most considerable parishes in an extensive district on the verge of ruin, without a shadow of excuse in any real necessity for their condition.* Those who have the immediate management in their hands state themselves aware of the fact, but are unable to arrest the progress of the evil. The overseer at North Molton states that he is under the magisterial influence in the course he adopts, and that all thought of discontinuing the allowance system has been long since abandoned. He referred to a few years since, when the practice of thus paying wages from the rates was fixed, when the paupers were in the habit of going in gangs to the magistrates' clerk to procure summonses, which he kept by him signed, and afterwards to the magistrate, in the object of which they were always successful. He states moreover that there are always differences of opinion taking place in the vestry, which precludes the possibility of any uniform system being adopted.

I should not be justified in occupying further space in detailing evidence of precisely similar character, which this part of the county of Devon affords. Every witness that I examined, of whatever party, profession or condition he might be, was agreed upon the point of the enormous magnitude and extent of the evils arising out of the present system of maintaining the poor, and it appeared that any change, whether great or small, would be hailed with satisfaction, as necessarily a step towards improvement, by those who are interested in the welfare of the poor and the security of property, and would receive their best endeavours to give it useful effect. Despair, under the pressure of their present burthens, has already led many farmers to emigrate with their capital to America.

Persons by whom Relief is awarded.

The evidence contained in the foregoing Report has all tended to the conclusion that the general results of a compulsory provision for the poor depend upon the manner in which it is administered; and cases sufficient perhaps have been stated to show in what respect its administration at present is either inefficient or mischievous. It will therefore be only necessary for me to refer very briefly to the different heads into which this branch of the inquiry has been divided in the Instructions.

1.—*Overseers.*—With regard to overseers annually chosen, the only means provided by law for the collection and proper distribution of the funds levied for the relief of the poor, the same opinion was every where expressed to me, that the farmers, tradespeople, and other persons who are usually selected to fill this office, are, from their other occupations, their

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Cases.

Singular influence of parochial system upon those not in need.

Case of South Molton important to be considered.

Condition of North Molton.

Paupers going in gangs for summonses.

1. Overseers.

General opinion.

* It is some proof that the poor are not naturally indisposed to provide for themselves that a clothing society, proceeding upon the principle adverted to before, which has been established by Lady Morley within the last two years, has been eagerly joined by many of the poor, who otherwise would have applied to the parish, and they have expressed themselves happy at having been induced to save their earnings the year before.

Appendix (A.)	their want of experience, and their local interests, totally disqualified for the duty. It is accepted by many solely under the terror of an indictment; and I have myself seen persons who have preferred the penalties of the law to undertaking the office. Any dissent from this opinion on the part of disinterested persons was confined to the small agricultural parishes where all improvement is resisted from the fear of adding to their present expenses. A paid and permanent officer to perform the duties of an overseer was declared to be indispensable by every intelligent witness that I examined. The frauds and abuses which had previously occurred had already led to the establishment of this protection in all the principal parishes of Worcestershire and Warwickshire.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Permanent overseer generally recommended.	In the northern division of Devon the appointment of a paid overseer has been chiefly confined to some of the towns or very extensive parishes.
Capabilities of annual overseers in North Devon, as observed by Revising Barrister.	I had some opportunity, during the registration of the voters in this county, of observing the capacities of the persons who are usually selected to fill the annual office of overseer. There are above 200 parishes in this division. In the larger proportion of cases they had felt themselves inadequate to the task of making out the lists, and had procured the assistance of some relation or friend, in whose scholarship they had greater confidence than their own. In some instances, I was assured that they had been unable to write themselves; in others, they affixed their marks as signatures in my presence (my colleague noted nine cases in which the overseers who appeared before him in a separate court had been unable to write);* some lists were made without any attention to the simplest requisites of the Act, others, without signatures at all; and the apology which was constantly offered by others for them, as well as by themselves, was, that they were no scholars, and that it was not to be expected that persons in their situation of life would perform the duty better. It was difficult, also, to make them understand in what their error had consisted, though for the part they had to do, no more intelligence was required than the least difficult business in keeping parochial accounts. When the lists were correctly made out, I observed it chiefly to have been done by some educated person who happened to fill the office for the time, or under the directions of some person of this kind unconnected by office with the parish; and perhaps the parish where least attention was paid to the Act, was that in which a gentleman had been appointed the overseer, and who, to avoid the trouble of the office altogether, had employed a young man in the village to perform the duties for him. Education has made no considerable progress in this county, and the farmers, from which class the overseers are selected, are not, perhaps, the most cultivated portion of the community. Mr. Chapple, who affords a striking exception to this observation, himself being the overseer for the year, has stated his opinion in writing. He says, "It often happens, and how can it be otherwise, that the person appointed to be the guardian of the parish purse, and manage the poor, is almost wholly ignorant of the duties which he has to perform, and before he has learnt to perform them he is displaced by another as ignorant as himself. Under such a regulation, all sorts of evils creep in and accumulate; often for the sake of saving trouble, the constant importunity of applicants, and sometimes for the sake of popularity that costs little to the individual, the parish funds are misapplied. A remedy for these evils in large parishes would be found in the appointment of a permanent overseer."
Mr. Chapple's evidence.	In many places, where great improvement has taken place in the parish management, the select vestry and the assistant overseer have been simultaneously appointed, and it is perhaps difficult to determine to whom the merit is due.
Advantages of permanent overseer considered.	No case, however, fell within my observation where a parish had derived any benefit from a select vestry, that a permanent overseer had not also been appointed. I have, however, mentioned several instances of the great advantage derived from the simple appointment of a paid overseer, or where the management of the parish had been chiefly controlled by one person. Banbury, on the borders of Warwickshire, is a town that I visited, which affords a striking proof of the advantage of a paid overseer. It is a place containing much wealth and intelligence; yet under the management of the annually chosen officers, its affairs had fallen into great disorder; debts had been contracted, paupers were discontented, and the poor generally dependent upon public relief. It was resolved to appoint a permanent overseer, with a salary of 40 <i>l.</i> per year. In the course of a few years the rates were reduced 50 per cent. A debt of 500 <i>l.</i> was paid off. The poor have become generally more content and better conducted. In 1830 there were great riots in this neighbourhood, and the rioters entered the town; they were chiefly composed of the pauperized labourers of the neighbouring parishes, but they were not joined by any of the poorer inhabitants of the town. The mayor of the town, an intelligent gentleman, who gave me this information, ascribed the improvement in the parish concerns to the appointment of the overseer. Where permanent and stipendiary overseers have not answered their purpose, it has arisen from an improper selection in the persons appointed, or from the injudicious interference of magistrates and vestrymen, or from their not being responsible to some efficient authority. The case of Kidderminster is of this kind, where the overseer had acted for 30 years, but always under borough magistrates, and where great mismanagement has taken place.
Banbury.	
Permanent overseer appointed.	The fear of adding to the immediate expenditure of the parish, in giving an adequate salary to the officer, and the opportunity which it affords to many who accept it of serving some interest of their own, is now frequently the occasion of persons filling the office who
Good results from.	ought
Cause of failure.	
Why the office is often ill filled.	

* I might venture to state that one fourth of the overseers whose lists came before me were unable to write, and in one instance the rates in the parish amount to nearly 7,000*l.* annually. I acted as Revising Barrister again this year in the South of Devon, and my observations here with regard to the overseers correspond with those in the North Division.

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ought to be disqualified from holding it. In some places I observed that they kept shops dealing in articles consumed by the poor; some kept public houses, as at Old Stratford, in Warwickshire. Some dealt in clothing and drapery, as at Bedworth; others in bread and grocery, as at Barnstaple; but even in these places I observed that the accounts were kept with more method and regularity than they were in other places by annual overseers, and at present the mode of keeping the accounts greatly influences the amount of expenditure. I found that in several parishes the rates had fallen immediately upon the accounts being rendered intelligible, and being published. At Leamington, the accounts are clearly kept; the overseer stated that he was in the habit of posting the names of the persons on the church door who received regular relief; that he was constantly being informed by the rate-payers of cases of imposture, either in paupers being at service or having other means of living. I have before referred to the case of Pershore, where a great reduction of expense was chiefly effected by making it apparent in what mode the parish money was spent. The case of Tardebigg, a large parish on the borders of Warwickshire and Worcestershire is another instance of this kind. The advantage, however, of some permanent, responsible and intelligent agent to perform all the duties connected with the office of overseer, appears to be every where recognised and admitted, and public policy demands the interference of the legislature to enforce the appointment of such an officer in every district in which funds are raised and distributed for the relief of the poor.

2.—*Vestries*.—The objection to the annually chosen overseer not being confined to his want of station and intelligence, but to his fitness for the office in other respects, vestrymen annually elected or selected may, for many of the same reasons, be considered disqualified for their office. When selected from the body of the rate-payers, they are chosen rather from the amount of their rateable property, which regulates also their influence in the vestry, than from possessing the qualities that ought to recommend them for the office, and though it is urged in favour of the system, that vestrymen, from residing in the same parish with the poor, become acquainted with their real circumstances and character, yet this qualification, when it exists, rather assures their competency as witnesses than as persons to exercise a wise or an honest discretion. Unless the poor can be relieved under the Poor Laws, according to some fixed and unbending rule, some person must be intrusted with a discretion in the application of the law, and for this to be exercised with advantage, not only experience and intelligence is required, but also such independence in character and circumstances as would place a person above the ill-will and odium necessarily incurred in a faithful discharge of the duty. The supposed identity of interest of the vestry with the parish at large cannot be relied on, or at all events affords no security either for judgment or integrity. The interests of vestrymen may be rather promoted than injured, either by what is termed liberality, or indeed by total neglect of duty, than by regularity or economy; if he is a tradesman he might gain more custom by a lavish expenditure of parish money, or in neglecting his duty, he may be more than compensated by the saving of time; and though one set of vestrymen should be found to perform their functions properly during one year, yet this can hardly be expected to happen for two years successively. The numbers which compose the select vestries are said to prevent the members individually from serving their interests at the expense of the parish; but their numbers, and the differences of opinion which occur among them, are also the occasion of evil, since they tend to raise the expectations of the poor, in obtaining relief by means of favour or particular influence.

Experience appears to offer little in answer to these objections to vestries in the districts that I visited. The common complaint against them was, that in their distribution of relief they were partial or injudicious, that in their attendance to the duty they were irregular, and that in their system of management they were uncertain and inconsistent from one year to another.

At Stratford-upon-Avon, the rate payers were said to be satisfied with the conduct and the result of a select vestry, which had been established since the year 1820; here, however, they are in the habit of re-electing the same gentleman each year as chairman of the vestry, who having first called the attention of the borough to the abuses which had previously existed, has ever since taken an active and judicious part in its control, and successive vestries are disposed to submit to his judgment; and its success in reducing the rates, and in preventing disorder in the affairs of the parish, has certainly been great. Stratford was, however, the exception. The common story told of the select vestries was, that they had been useful on their first appointment, as they had checked or corrected the abuses, which led to their establishment, but that they soon deteriorated; and that between jobbing and neglect, parishes derived but little permanent advantage from them. In provincial towns there is a great disinclination in competent persons to meddle with parish concerns; they neither have the leisure, nor is any adequate motive afforded to them to incur the ill-will of friends or others, by serving the parish. In nearly every town where they had been established, I found that the clergyman abstained from attending the vestry meetings, either from the disrespect which was shown to him by the other vestrymen, or from not wishing to place himself in painful collision with most of his parishioners among the poor. Select vestries are, therefore, usually composed of persons in one class of life, and are practically subject to little control; they partake much of the character of oligarchical bodies, and chiefly depend for their advantage upon the particular persons who compose them.

At Chilvers Coton, in Warwickshire, at Stourbridge, in Worcestershire, at Newton St. Agnes, Linton, and Crediton, in Devonshire, they had been discontinued from the dissatisfaction which they had occasioned for the reasons above named. The light in which I found them viewed most favourably, was as checking the control of the magistrates: but, perhaps, no stronger proof can be afforded of the want of confidence in them which generally prevails, than

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Effect of keeping
accounts clearly.
Leamington.

Pershore.

Tardebigg.

General opinion:

2. Vestries.

Their qualification
to manage the poor
considered.Result of expe-
rience.

Exceptions.

Cause of.

Clergymen never
attend.Vestries abolished,
not having been
found to answer.In what light view-
ed favourably.

Appendix (A.)	than the fact that notwithstanding the very general complaint made against the magistrates, few persons, besides some who might be vestrymen themselves, considered it safe either to relieve them from their control, or allow them exclusive jurisdiction in the management of the poor, not because they might be cruel in their treatment of the poor, as no such charge was any where made, but from not having the qualifications to inspire any permanent confidence or respect. To reduce their number (which I found usually to be the maximum under the Act, namely, 20) without changing the principle of their appointment, or extending the duration of their service, would expose them to many of the objections made to the annual overseers; and the argument, founded on their present number, acting as a check upon each other, though not perhaps much supported by experience, would be destroyed. If their duty was merely ministerial, the value of their service might be different, but then the annual overseer might equally answer this purpose; and if vestries are to be placed immediately under the control of a superior board, it will be a complaint that their time and trouble is unnecessarily demanded, and they would be without the motive of temporary power and consequence to seek the office.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Principle of their composition wrong.	
Open vestries.	The vestries to which I refer are those formed under the 59 Geo. III. Should it be thought necessary to inquire further into their operation, the most competent persons for giving evidence will be found to be the permanent overseers, who are in the habit of attending their meetings. With regard to the open vestries, where the rate-payers at large may attend, in the opinion of many intelligent residents in different parishes, they amount either to no superintendence whatever, or to one of a mischievous character, and that, either from every man's duty being the particular duty of none, no regular attendance at all takes place, or that a few persons, as it often happens in the select vestry, presuming upon the apathy of the rest, obtain an influence, which they abuse, in the management of the parish. It is obvious that there is less responsibility attaching to the conduct of what are called open vestries and less security for judgment or character than in the select vestries. The fault, however, in each, is, in one respect, the same, namely, that they have, in their management of public relief to the poor, an important trust to perform, and that they afford no security under the circumstances in which they act for the proper execution of it.
More objectionable than select.	
3. Magistrates.	3.— <i>Magistrates.</i> —The manner in which the magistrates have exercised their control in the distribution of parochial relief has occasioned great discontent. It was the prominent topic of complaint in every district that I visited. From their station and habits of life they are said to be generally unacquainted with the real condition of the poor, or the means which they have of procuring employment. They are consequently open to imposture, and are frequently misled by the appearance or statements of paupers. It is also said, that from wishing to be thought friendly to the poor, that they are not unwilling to attend to their appeals, whether in cases of real distress, or otherwise, which is more the subject of remark, from the circumstance that in most instances the paupers who apply have not a settlement in the parish where the magistrate resides; and it is alleged by the persons who commonly fill the offices of the parish, that they habitually submit to great abuses on the part of the paupers, in order to avoid the odium and inconvenience of resisting their applications to the magistrate, as well as the mischievous effect in the parish of the paupers' triumph, the common termination of such appeals. It was frequently remarked, moreover, that the magistrates were greatly under the influence of the attorney whom they select as their clerk, and on whom they depend for information in matters of law, who, being remunerated by fees upon proceedings, has a strong interest in multiplying the business of the sessions, a circumstance of which, it is said, the paupers are not unapt to avail themselves. Instances were mentioned to me, where magistrates had, by experience, become well acquainted with the law, and who performed their duty with great advantage to their district; but I am bound to say, that they appeared to be the exceptions to the rule, and I am induced to think that the general charges made against the magistrates in their Poor Law jurisdiction are true, from the circumstance that they were admitted to be so, in many respects, to myself, by several of the magistrates themselves. One gentleman, living upon his property, informed me, that though he was in the commission of the peace, yet that he had never qualified to act, from feeling that, in administering the Poor Laws, he could neither act with satisfaction to himself or advantage to the county. The overseers of the parish, he said, were far more competent to judge of the real condition of the paupers than himself, and that, though intending to benefit the poor, he might in fact do them great mischief. Another magistrate in the same county fully admitted the mischievous influence of the magisterial system with regard to the poor, but considered that the magistrates of the present day were helpless in the matter, and imputed the blame of its existence to the magistrates who had preceded them.
General complaint of.	
Evils occasioned by.	At ——— a magistrate stated that he considered that in his neighbourhood, if a gentleman, living upon his own property, was strictly to perform his duty, in a large proportion of the cases where paupers appealed to them from their overseers, that they would be in danger of having their cattle maimed or their property destroyed.
Exceptions in favour of.	A magistrate residing near ——— spoke of the utter impossibility of country gentlemen residing upon their properties in the neighbourhood of populous districts being able to administer the Poor Law with that fearlessness and confidence which, for the real advantage of the poor as well as the property, was absolutely required. At ——— a magistrate of 30 years standing, having acted in that capacity in two counties, fully confirmed what is generally alleged against the present system of administering the Poor Law by the magistrates. He said, that in the course of his experience he had witnessed the great evils which it occasioned, and that he was convinced that pauperism was much encouraged by it. He said that many magistrates who acted were very ignorant of the law, and that they were generally without any of the experience which qualified them for the office. He said that for a magistrate now to decide properly upon a pauper's application to him against his parish, he ought at least to be
Reasons for believing the charges made against.	
Evidence of magistrates.	

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Quarter sessions.

Petty sessions.

Fees.

Riots.

Competency.

North Devon.

be as well informed as the overseers of the character of the pauper and the circumstances of the parish, which he said he could answer for, was rarely the case, and he considered that no magistrates could act with much advantage who were not constantly resident and practically responsible, and that it was idle to expect any person to answer these conditions who were not paid and made removable. Another magistrate addressed a letter to the Board, requesting that the Assistant Commissioner visiting Worcestershire, would attend the quarter sessions, which request he also repeated to myself when I met him in the country. I was unfortunately prevented from complying with his wish; the object, however, of this gentleman was, that I might witness the irregular and inconsistent manner in which the Poor Law was applied.*

Upon attending myself the petty sessions at ——— I found only one magistrate present, and between 30 and 40 people waiting to have their cases decided. This gentleman lamented to me that his brother magistrates were not present, as, from his own want of experience, he was wholly unable to give me any information on the subject of this inquiry.

At ——— the petty sessions are held once a fortnight. A gentleman to whom I was referred by one of the members for the borough, as a person on whose testimony I might depend, stated, that if he was an overseer, he would prefer to pay a pauper, though he doubted his necessities, and submit to be cheated by his servant, rather than waste his time in seeking the questionable justice dispensed at these sessions. At ——— a young magistrate inquired why the paupers preferred applying to him rather than to his older colleagues; he was answered, that it was usually the case when magistrates commenced acting, since they were unacquainted with the real character of the pauper, who calculated upon his inexperience. At ——— a respectable farmer complained to me that his property was consumed by the poor-rate, and that the magistrates whom he named did not keep a clerk, but that the fees on proceedings are notwithstanding exacted. In the neighbourhood of ——— a case was mentioned to me by the son of an overseer, whose father had been rebuked by the magistrate for his folly in not giving relief to a worthless fellow who had summonsed him, and who might, in consequence of his refusal, fire his (the overseer's) stacks. The same magistrate had lately refused to allow a woman to work to whom a farmer had offered to give 2s. 6d. a week for what she was able to do, saying that she was past work. Great complaints were made in the neighbourhood of the interference of this magistrate. The poor were described as being in a most demoralised state; 18 fires were seen blazing upon one occasion in this division, the work of incendiaries.

In the Kirby division two magistrates ordered a man 25s. a week (his family consisted of a wife and three children), in the teeth of the evidence of another magistrate, who was a clergyman, that the man was an impostor, and had the means of supporting himself. The parish afterwards indicted the pauper for perjury on this occasion, and he was convicted, and the judge stated that it was a most proper prosecution. During the riots in the neighbourhood of Stow, in Gloucestershire, some of the magistrates went round themselves to insist upon the farmers giving higher wages, making larger allowances to men with families.

In the neighbourhood of Bromsgrove and Tardebigg, it was stated to me by three gentlemen, one of whom was a clergyman, that the residence of the magistrates was so uncertain and so distant, that they had each, upon different occasions, been compelled to send a distance of between 50 and 60 miles, to take the necessary proceeding against persons who had committed some depredation upon their property, which was mentioned as showing the inconvenience of which overseers may be sometimes exposed, should they refuse to relieve the pauper, and have to attend a summons before the magistrate.

At ——— a very long list of magistrates was shown to me, as those who were attached to the district; not more, however, than three, or at most four, were mentioned to me, by their own officer, as persons whose experience or competency would render it useful to refer to them for information on the subject of this inquiry. Upon applying to one of these, however, I was referred to an overseer of a neighbouring parish, whose experience in matters affecting the poor he considered well deserving of attention. Upon examining this person, he expressed a stronger opinion than I had yet heard upon the evils which were occasioned by the Poor Law jurisdiction of the magistrates; he mentioned several cases in support of his opinion, and he appeared to think that no magistracy for this purpose could be efficient, who were not constantly resident, and made independent of local circumstances.

Precisely the same complaints of the magistrates were made throughout the north of Devon†, evidence of which, I have already stated in my Report upon that district [Vide North Molton, North Tawton, &c.]

The absence of any obligation upon the magistrates for constant and regular attendance appears to be one necessary cause for their not acquiring that experience which might arm them against the imposition of paupers. At Collumpton, the overseer informed me that the magistrates' sessions were chiefly regulated by the state of the moon, which was explained to me by a magistrate, who said that their meetings were generally appointed at the

* A magistrate, who states himself as having considerable experience in the administration of the Poor Laws, has sent written answers to the queries which I sent to him; he suggests, that the decisions on settlement cases in the King's Bench should be forwarded to the petty sessions, since he says, though the parishes interested are acquainted with the result, the justices are never so, unless they have access to the Term Reports, which *nine out of ten never see*.

† In one parish of this division, I was informed that the magistrates suffered persons who were summoned by the overseer to refuse to disclose what they were paying the paupers in their service who applied for relief, telling them that they were not compelled to do it if they were unwilling.

Appendix (A.)	the time of full moon, as an inducement to some magistrates to attend, who would then have a light evening to return home.
Reports.	The borough magistrates are not open generally to the objections of non-residence, and ignorance of the condition of the poor; but from those cases which fell within my observation, and from the information that I received, they appeared in other respects to be still less qualified than the county justices for their Poor-Law jurisdiction. They have usually less knowledge of the law, and are more immediately interested in its misapplication; clergymen and lawyers are sometimes placed in the commission of the peace for the county, but they are seldom found acting as magistrates in corporate towns. In the Coventry* district, over which the borough magistrates have jurisdiction, so great is the complaint against them, that a petition to Parliament is now in contemplation by the surrounding parishes, praying to be separated from the borough for magisterial purposes. [<i>Vide</i> Foleshill Accounts, in which it appears that the parish doctor might be the chief magistrate for the district.] From my Report upon Kidderminster, it may be inferred, that the borough magistrates may have some interest in their administration of the Poor Laws, as one of them was said to possess nearly 80 houses, none of which paid rates, and for some of which the parish was paying rent in the form of relief. Manufacturers moreover are frequently on the bench, and their workmen constantly apply for relief, or occupy houses which belong to their masters, and are exempted from the payment of rates. South Molton is a striking instance of the same kind. The unfitness, however, of tradesmen or professional persons carrying on any business in the town, being annually elected to administer any branch of the law, perhaps hardly needs illustration.
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Borough magistrates less qualified to administer the Poor Laws than the justices of the county.	
Coventry district.	
Kidderminster.	
South Molton.	
Little blame attaches to the present magistrates.	I have thought it my duty to state these complaints to the Commission, against the magistracy, in consequence of the urgent and unceasing manner in which they were pressed upon my attention, and they cannot, I apprehend, be considered, in the present state of the country, otherwise than important. I am induced however to think that little blame attaches to the present magistrates for their system of administering the Poor Laws, excepting in those cases in which they are justly charged with acting under the influence of interest or fear. I am disposed also to think that they are very generally alive to the unfortunate consequences of their Poor Law jurisdiction, and that, far from being tenacious of their authority, they are simply actuated in their desire to retain it, by a mistrust† of the persons who, without the magistrate's control, would now have exclusive jurisdiction over the poor. But in imputing little blame to the present magistrates, I would be understood to mean that, owing to the injudicious modes of awarding relief to the able-bodied poor, which originated with former magistrates, their successors are unable, without the aid of some legislative enactment, to surrender their Poor Law jurisdiction, or to effect any useful change in their system. The appointments of magistrates are so numerous and indiscriminate, that all uniformity in practice, or permanent improvement, is rendered hopeless. For which reason I believe that I should faithfully represent the opinions, no less of the magistracy themselves, than the rest of the community, in impressing upon the Commission that competent and responsible persons should be invested with a jurisdiction for the purpose of administering the laws affecting the poor.
Not tenacious of their jurisdiction.	
Should be relieved.	
Local Boards.	It was frequently observed to me, that the affairs of parishes would be better managed if persons of station and property would take a more immediate share in their control,‡ which might also be the means of dispensing with stipendiary officers to administer the law. But upon examining qualifications of property, upon which the directors of the poor are chosen in parishes managed under local Acts, they appear to have been fixed upon with this view; and this opinion is not supported by the results. At Coventry, the Act uniting the parishes of St. Michael and the Holy Trinity, bearing date the year 1792, provides, that all persons rated to the poor, and seised in fee or for life, or for a term of 10 years determinable upon lives of the annual value of 50 l., or being rated to the poor for property worth 30 l. a year, are declared guardians of the poor; these are to elect 18 out of their own body, each of whom are to serve two years as directors. I found that the inhabitants of most affluence and consideration in the city were usually chosen as directors: a penalty is imposed upon non-attendance, and though a quorum was not formed on the day of my visit, on account of its being the day of the Warwick races, yet I was assured that the absence of 12 out of 18 was not a usual occurrence.
Coventry.	
Qualification of directors.	
No security.	The misapplication of a sum, however, which must be reckoned at nearly 10,000 l., and said to be for electioneering purposes, (upon which I have reported above,) is at once instructive as to the real efficiency of such a test of the fitness of persons for this office. The reason, as I understood, for its being difficult to prove any wilful misapplication of the parochial funds, in this instance, was, that it had been chiefly given as casual or occasional relief, and that from the large discretion which is vested in the directors for this purpose, it is difficult to determine when it is granted properly or otherwise; in either case, however, whether granted injudiciously or dishonestly, it is an argument against a board constituted upon this principle.
Evidence of director.	On my questioning Mr. ———, a most respectable and intelligent director, whether he conceived that it would be advisable to raise the qualification for the directors, he stated,

* Coventry is a county of itself, and includes within it several parishes; this fact is stated by a gentleman living in one of them.

† I was not able to learn that there was any just ground for this apprehension. One magistrate, who had been acting in two divisions of the county of Devon for 25 years, informed me that he had never seen any disposition in the overseers to be cruel or oppressive to the poor: this gentleman has the character of being really benevolent, and is much beloved by the poor.

‡ The Rev. Mr. Davison has suggested this notion, in his able pamphlet on the Poor Laws.

stated, that upon his experience for many years, he was satisfied that one great cause of past mismanagement was, from the qualification being already too high, and that a great deal of money had been misapplied from the ignorance of the directors as to the real wants and circumstances of the poor, which if they were more habitually among them they would know. This gentleman, however, made another remark, which I have no doubt equally applies to other places as well as Coventry, but is at the same time a difficulty in the way of giving effect to the improvement he suggested; namely, that in old cities like Coventry, it was impossible for any number of directors to be chosen from the inhabitants without their being constantly exposed to applications being made to them by some of their relations or connexions, whom, if they did not relieve from the funds of the parish, might come upon themselves for assistance or support, and that this did constantly more or less influence the judgment of the directors.

The qualification of the guardians at Birmingham is being assessed in the rates made for the relief of the poor, in a sum not less than 20 *l.* per annum, and they have been hitherto chosen by the rate-payers at large. The Act has been lately amended, and the qualification for the vote for a guardian has been raised, but under the old system wealthy and influential persons had always been selected for guardians.

Mr. Edmonds, a solicitor, of Birmingham, however, states, that it is only within a few years that public attention had been directed, through his means, to a system of abuse and mismanagement, of long standing, in the conduct of parish affairs, which he considered as unparalleled in any case; he stated also, that it had been the practice of the guardians in office to nominate their successors, and that there had been no check whatever offered to their proceedings, owing to the great apathy evinced in the town at the time of the election; he said, that by his means a party in the town had been formed who made out lists of the persons whom they think the fittest to be elected, and sent them round to the rate-payers, and that the election was conducted with more spirit and justice at present; but, upon asking this gentleman upon what security he depended for the system not relapsing again into the state in which he had found it, he said, that he thought it improbable, since he had directed public attention to the matter.

There appears to be little advantage, moreover, in this large number of guardians (108) since the quorum is 18; they may therefore be rarely or always the same persons who attend the meetings, which in either case is objectionable; nor is there any ground for it from the extent of the population, since some populous parishes are known to be better managed where they are subject to the control of a single person; and the Birmingham district affords an instance of this kind. The parish of Aston is, for all purposes connected with the employment of the poor, under the same circumstances as the parish of Birmingham, and the population does not exceed one-third of that in Birmingham, yet as it exceeds 30,000, it will admit of comparison. The whole parish is practically under the management of the governor of the workhouse, who had had some years' experience in the office; he has two persons under him to visit and ascertain the condition of the poor; and the accounts are audited every quarter at the vestry by a parish committee for this purpose. He says, his rule is to give the poor some work to do whenever they apply for relief, and that it is generally within his own sight, or that they are set to work on the piece; he states that the management is left to himself, and that he does not suffer other people to interfere with him.

The result, judging it by the amount of poor rates, is in favour of the management by a single person.

					£.
ASTON	-	-	Annual Value in 1815	-	53,142.
	-	-	Population - 1831	-	32,118.
	-	-	Rates - 1830	-	5,699.
BIRMINGHAM	-	-	Annual Value in 1815	-	247,058.
	-	-	Population - 1831	-	110,918.
	-	-	Poor's Rates - 1830	-	41,560.

WORCESTER.

The following extract from the local Act under which the eight parishes in the city are incorporated, provides for the qualification of the directors, "all persons being rated and assessed to the relief of the poor in any of the said parishes, and being seised or possessed or entitled to freeholds and copyholds, lands or tithes, in fee or for life, or for a term of years determinable upon lives, of the yearly value of 30 *l.* and upwards, or being rated in respect of any lands, hereditaments or tithes of the yearly value of 15 *l.* on being rated for a less yearly value than 15 *l.* and being possessed of 500 *l.* personal estate; and also the ecclesiastical rectors and vicars for the time being are incorporated, under the name of wardens of the poor." The wardens are then directed to choose from their own body twelve discreet persons as "Directors of the Poor," to serve for three years, four going out each year by ballot among themselves, and four fresh directors to be chosen by the remaining eight. Weekly meetings are then appointed at the workhouse, and three to be the quorum.

The date of the Act is 1792. Every inhabitant, however, whom I examined upon the management of the poor, referred to the period* of the present governor of the house entering upon his office as the time when an improvement had commenced, which is confirmed by the fact, that the rates are now 2,000 *l.* a year less than when the trade was good, previously to his being appointed.

It was stated here, as in other places, where directors and local boards are established, that the relief was too often distributed as patronage; but it may also be inferred, that the duty is considered irksome, and that few are ambitious of undertaking it, from the fact, that a fine of 20 *l.* is imposed upon those who refuse to serve the office, and that two instances had

Birmingham.

Qualification of guardians.

Mr. Edmonds.

No advantage in large body of guardians.

Shown in the case of Aston.

Qualification under local Act.

Good management owing to the governor.
* 1819.

Directorship considered an irksome office.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Tewkesbury Act.

Arrangement of directors.

Why not successful.

Conclusion respecting local boards.

occurred of its being paid this year. It is moreover provided, that any warden having served once, is to be exempt for five years afterwards, and that all are exempted after the age of 65.

At Tewkesbury there is also a local act which provides for the election of nine directors out of a body of guardians, determined by the amount of their property, and a fine of 20 *l.* is imposed upon persons refusing to serve, which may be taken as an indication of the high class of persons who are expected to fill the office. My Report upon this town proves, however, that the management is not more judicious than in many places where persons of property exercise but little or no control over the parish.

It is the practice of the directors to divide the labour of superintendence amongst them; for instance, there are two accountants, two for the house department; two caterers, one gardener to attend to the general business of the garden, and take care of the hedges and bounds, and see to the disposing of all garden stuff; one is inspector of dwelling house, and another has the management of the out-door department.

This arrangement might doubtless be extremely useful, if the persons understood their business, but they have their own affairs to attend to, and provision is therefore made for the office not being permanent, so that it may happen that no department is attended to for more than one year by the same person. Gross frauds are doubtless prevented by this system; but no security is afforded by it against the want of experience and judgment on the part of the directors, which I found to be the great cause of parochial mismanagement.

Of these local boards, therefore, it may be generally observed, that they are composed of persons who are inexperienced in the business which they have to perform, and, being unrequited for their service, there is but little responsibility attached to their conduct, and that, while their character for efficiency must depend upon that of the permanent and subordinate officer attached to their establishment, his utility may be much diminished by being subject to improper control.

ASSESSMENT.

Great complaints of.

Exceptions.

Mode of assessing.

Mode of levying the rate.

Unequal assessment submitted to.

Reason of.

Inequality illustrated.

The mode in which property is assessed to the poor's rate, is the occasion of great injustice and oppression, and it is so felt and complained of throughout the district that I visited.

The exceptions to this are generally to be found in those parishes which have been recently valued, after having long been subjected to an unjust assessment.

A proportion only of the annual value is assessed, such as two-thirds, three-fourths, or five-ninths, for which rule no sound reason is ever assigned. It always has in view to conceal the real value, but in this it is of necessity ineffectual, as the proportions being given, the whole value is known, and indefensible, if any advantage could be obtained from assessing the rack-rent. A difference is also made in the assessment of houses and lands, which, however, proceeds upon no uniform principle, since between some parishes the proportions on each vary inversely. The proportion of the value to be assessed is usually settled at the time when the property of the parish is valued and the assessable value of each property is entered, with the name of the occupier, in the rate-book, and that amount remains there until a fresh valuation is made. A rate in the pound upon this property is made once or oftener in the course of the year, and is raised by what are termed "levies" or "collection," either at once or at different times, according to the practice in the parish. In consequence, however, of the great change in the value of property which is constantly occurring, and of the obstacles in the way of procuring a new valuation, individual properties often become and remain unequally assessed. To disturb an old assessment is considered as hazardous, and is, for the most part, too obnoxious to be attempted by individuals. Many persons profit by its inequality, others feel uncertain of the result of a new valuation to themselves, and others fear the expense and hazard of an appeal to the sessions. Great injustice is therefore submitted to, either from the fear of offending influential persons, or from the inability to procure redress, as well as from the parish not agreeing upon the mode of having a fresh valuation.

A notion may be formed of the inequalities which may exist in the assessment from the following instance. The two columns represent the different rating under the new and old valuation of the property in the parish of Foleshill:

Old Quality Book.				New Quality Book.			
	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
The Rev. T. C. R. was rated for Tithes, at	34	—	—	at	185	—	—
Mr. E.	145	—	—	„	274	—	—
Mr. M.	224	—	—	„	344	—	—
Mr. T.	223	—	—	„	156	—	—
Mr. R. R.	76	—	—	„	56	15	—
Mr. T. S.	210	5	—	„	273	5	—
Mr. E. L.	81	15	6	„	162	2	6
F. P. Esq.	41	5	6	„	86	5	6
Mr. S.	54	12	6	„	108	12	6

Kidderminster.

Mancetter.

Malvern.

The overseers of the Foreign of Kidderminster, state, that no fresh assessment has been made in that parish within the memory of any living man. The Foreign is the outskirt of the town of Kidderminster, where the population has more than doubled within 30 years; and the value of the property has much changed. In the parish of Mancetter, before mentioned, land is said to have deteriorated to the extent of throwing the assessment upon the rack-rent, which before had been upon two-thirds of real value; while, houses having become more valuable, the assessment remains the same, which had been upon half of their original value.

At Malvern the property has not been valued for many years, and the old assessment is continued, but there has been great change here in the value of property, from its having

having now become a place of great resort for strangers; the inequality of the rate is said to be notorious. The overseer at Malvern stated, that he was well acquainted with all the neighbouring parishes, and that he knew for a fact, that the assessments, in the greater number of them, were extremely unfair and unequal, but that "nobody liked to move in it." If a strict inquiry was made, it would be found that the clergy are, in many places, most unjustly assessed, owing to the assessment being made upon the value to which they are entitled, and not upon what they receive; also from the clergyman not being willing to appeal against the rate in his own parish. I have letters now from clergymen complaining of this injustice in their parish, but especially requesting that their names may not be published, from a fear of the ill-will it would occasion to them, expressing a hope only that some inquiry will be instituted into the fact with a view to their relief.

In the north of Devon, where there is perhaps less spirit and intelligence to resist oppression of this kind, there is said to be great abuse in the assessment of property. The case of Hartland, as it was reported to me by Mr. ——— who occupied land there for many years, is an instance of this kind. Twenty-four persons, styling themselves *the elders*, who are self-elected, undertake the management of the parish: there is great misapplication of the funds in parochial feasting, and the payment of wages out of rates. It is alleged against them, that they avoid assessing a property worth 20,000*l.*, owing to the influence of the proprietor, and that their own properties are unequally assessed, and that persons did not like to appeal against the rate, for fear of the expense and of making enemies in the parish.*

I made inquiry as to the best modes of enforcing a new assessment; and the following parishes illustrate those which are resorted to at present.

At Wootton Wawen, in Warwickshire, the inequality of the assessment having been long complained of, a professional man residing in the county was retained to re-value the property, his charge was 3*l.* 3*s.* a day, together with other expenses. The parish is purely agricultural.

Annual value	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£. 15,068
Number of acres	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,770
Population in 1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,090

The surveyor's charge was 300 guineas!

Different modes are resorted to for the purpose of economy. In the parish of Old Stratford the assessment was of forty years' standing; its inequality had become of late years very marked: six of the principal rate-payers agreed to re-value the parish, upon receiving the expense of their living while so employed; this they accomplished in a few days, and the result appeared to have given satisfaction.

Annual value	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£. 10,646
Population	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,860

At Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, there had been no fresh assessment since the year 1787, the value of the property had greatly changed. The vestry lately determined to receive tenders from different surveyors, stating the fixed sum for which they would complete the valuation. If this competition was confined to surveyors of known character and independence, it appears to be the best mode of reducing the expense of a new assessment. [*Vide* Instructions, p. 31.]

At Leamington a rating committee is appointed by a parish committee, who perambulate the town every quarter to inspect the new buildings, which is found to be necessary, from their rapid increase; this is done openly, upon some fixed principle, and is quite satisfactory to the town: should any property belong to a relation of the committee, he takes no part in the valuation. This place is perhaps under peculiar circumstances; but the principle of a district committee to re-value and assess property at stated periods appears to be good.

There are but few instances of property being avowedly exempted from assessment; but great neglect and injustice takes place in the collection of the rates.

This is occasioned either from positive fraud, or partiality on the part of the overseer, or from the practice, which I found to exist in many places, of exempting cottages altogether, on the plea of the occupier's poverty.

At Banbury the landlord of the principal inn stated, that a positive fraud had been committed in that town for years past by the exemption of cottages on this plea; for that deliberate speculation had taken place in building, with the view to procuring tenants who would be able to pay a good rent upon being exempted from the rate; and that he knew of one income of 100*l.* a year derived from this source alone. He stated that one of his own post-boys, who, on an average, was earning 2*l.* per week, had occupied a house of this kind, and had always been exempted until he (landlord) happened to serve the office of overseer himself, when he detected the fraud, and compelled him to pay; he stated, that during the time he served the office, he had observed the constant opportunity which was afforded to overseers of showing favour to their friends in the collection of the rates. At Coventry a regular loss of 5,000*l.* a year is sustained by the united parishes of St. Michael and the Holy Trinity, from what are termed "cravings," which are exemptions of small cottages which belong to the tradespeople, who build or purchase them as a profitable investment of their money.

In the parish of Foleshill, a local Act was obtained, making all owners liable; in the first year 80*l.* was collected from houses which before had been exempt. I was told that the owners had made great complaint in consequence, as it changed the value of their property, and that to many it would not answer to retain them in occupation, unless they could procure tenants who would pay the rate.

* I am unable to vouch for the truth of this statement myself, but it was repeated to me by a gentleman of property and character.

Appendix (A.)	In the Birmingham Act it is provided, that the owners of all houses, lands, &c., not exceeding the annual value of 12<i>l.</i>, or of houses of any other value if let to weekly or monthly tenants, or if let in separate apartments for any period of time whatever, shall be liable to the payment of the poor's rates levied thereon. This was rendered absolutely necessary, from the circumstance, that upwards of one-half of the inhabited houses in Birmingham are under the value of 10<i>l.</i>, and that a large proportion of them are owned by a few proprietors, and the plea of poverty was constantly made by the occupiers for non-payment of rate. The provisions of this Act, however, will not completely answer the object of assessing the owners, instead of the occupiers. The limitation of time to weeks and months has already led to the evasion of returning the occupiers as quarterly tenants; and there is one provision in the Act which makes the property of the occupiers liable for the rate to the amount of their rent due, and another which empowers the Justices to remit any portion of the rate when landlords have been unable to recover their rent; the landlord and the tenant therefore might, by connivance, each escape the payment of the rates, since the rates are to be remitted to the owner, upon proving no sufficient distress upon the premises of his tenant.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Birmingham.	
Owners of houses assessed.	It has already been mentioned, that at Kidderminster, out of 2,380 houses assessed, rate was collected upon only 580, making the whole burthen fall upon that number, and it was further stated, that the collections from them were extremely partial. The unproductive houses were chiefly owned by some of the richest of the tradespeople, who in turn fill the office of magistrate, or by the manufacturers, who stop the rent out of the weekly wages of their men.
Evasion of local Act.	
Kidderminster.	
Tewkesbury.	
North Devon.	At Tewkesbury, great complaints were made on the same ground. The rate upon the assessment in the adjoining parish was said to amount to 600<i>l.</i>, of which 500<i>l.</i> only was collected, 100<i>l.</i> a year being thus annually lost to the parish, and gained by individual proprietors.
New voters.	
Mr. Chapple.	
Bow.	
General opinion.	In the north division of Devon, it is the custom for the occupiers to agree with the landlord to pay what are termed "the outs," which includes the rates and Parliamentary taxes; and in the rate-books of Tiverton, Barnstaple, Pilton, and N. Tawton, where the 10<i>l.</i> householders have been enfranchised, several were disqualified, from the owners' names being on the rate. In many instances, however, I observed, that the rates had not been paid, and the difficulty in the collection, as well as the advantage of showing favour in it, is probably greater in this case than in the others, which may be accounted for by the reason assigned by Mr. Chapple, in his written answers, "that there is no person ever appointed under the present system who is fit or capable of collecting or enforcing the payment of the rates;" he cites the instance of Bow, where an intelligent person was managing the parish with great advantage, and was compelled to renounce the office, which he had filled for several successive years, from his difficulty in collecting the rates. If the evil here, as in other parts of the system, arising from fixing a difficult duty upon ill-qualified, unwilling and unrequited persons, could be removed, the general opinion appeared to be in favour of the owner being rendered equally liable with the occupier in all cases where property is liable to the poor-rate.
Settlement.	SETTLEMENT. Of all the laws which affect the interests of the poor, there are none of which the revision is more immediately necessary than that of the law of settlement. It is almost vain to suggest any change in the system of maintaining the poor, without removing from it this obstacle to all improvement.
Necessity of revision.	
Cause of many abuses.	
Erroneous principle of.	
Origin of Parishes.	To this mode of determining the liabilities of property may be referred many of the abuses which have attended a public provision for the poor. In charging the parochial divisions of the country with the maintenance of what is termed "their own poor," the law proceeds upon a principle admitted to be erroneous. It assumes the existence of some definite relation between the poor and the property, out of which they are to be maintained, or of some resources in "local and visible property," that can be expanded with the increasing exigencies of the charge. History, however, is silent as to any connection between the circumstances which determined the limits of parishes, and the possible number of poor to be maintained within them. The institution of churches, with properties attached to them, were for the most part the subject of private endowment, and had ecclesiastical purposes only in view; and if the property intended for the support of the church was at any time rendered legally liable to the maintenance of the poor, the portion allotted for that purpose was fixed and defined. But whatever were the liabilities intended to attach to that property, it is clear that the many circumstances which may now influence the amount or necessities of a population, growing up or settling upon one spot of ground, were not in contemplation; to fix, therefore, a charge, varying in amount, with all such circumstances, upon property adapted, upon no calculation whatever, to its support, is matter of mere caprice. The absence, moreover, of any equitable claim whatever to the property in a parish on the part of the poor that may be chargeable upon it, is at present notorious; if it were not, the mere consideration of the modes in which settlements may on the one hand be acquired, or prevented, according to the nature and distribution of the property in a parish, would show the arbitrary consequence of the law: or if indeed it were supposed that the system had any tendency to equalize itself,* the fact of some parishes being at present burthened nearly beyond their means of endurance, while others immediately adjoining, with far greater power of bearing the charge, are exempt,
Arbitrary operation of law.	

* There is a farm at present which remains unoccupied on account of the poor-rates, which are too high for any tenant to pay, in consequence of one-half of it being within the united parishes of Coventry, though the other half is within a parish where the rates are under 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound.

exempt, without any credit or blame attaching to either, would at once prove the error of such an opinion.

The original enactment of this system for maintaining the poor of the country, appears to have contemplated its obvious injustice; and hence provision was made for one parish levying contribution in aid upon another, whose means were less exhausted than its own by the rate. The construction, however, which this provision has received in the courts, confines its application to a case of actual necessity, and leaves a parish to suffer short of that point without any remedy.

Much within the first century after the passing this Act (43d Eliz.) the inconvenience and inefficiency of the parochial system for giving it effect, was felt and complained of; and a remedy for some of its evils was attempted (under the 13th and 14th Charles II.), by extending to other divisions of the country the right to assess the property and maintain the poor within their own limits, without reference to the parishes in which they are situate. If, however, in particular cases, advantage has been derived from this measure, the country at large has been benefited but little, since the more closely the country is divided for the purpose, the more is the field extended for litigation, expense and mismanagement, and the more in number are the obstacles presented to the free circulation of labour; for the evil is not confined to the first error in principle, in fixing upon particular property a charge as general in its purpose as any impost or tax raised for the public service, but the obligation imposed upon these different sections to manage and distribute, as well as raise, the fund within their own limits, is amongst the worst consequences which spring from this law. It has been computed, that the number of places in England and Wales upon which this liability attaches, exceeds 14,500; and each place is directed by law annually to select two or more overseers of the poor; it is therefore expected that each year these places will be able to produce upwards of 29,000 or more honest, judicious and otherwise capable persons, to levy, collect and apply the parochial fund the most for the advantage of the poor and the property of the kingdom. How little this expectation has been realized, the result of this and every previous inquiry has fully shown. It was, however, suggested to me, upon more than one occasion, that it might still be useful to continue this system, upon the ground that parishes and townships having each a particular interest in reducing the rates, they would be prompted to discover the best modes of applying the law and of protecting themselves. This is a notion, however, which appears to proceed either from ignorance of the various circumstances under which these different sections are placed, either regarded separately or in relation to each other, or of what are the principal interests involved in the matter. In the first place, it is a fallacy to reason from analogy, as is done here, to the case of individuals, who, whether fit or not to manage their private concerns, should clearly be trusted to do so, rather than be subjected to public interference; but parishes and townships are already interfered with by law, in being compelled to raise a fund for the maintenance of those whom the law declares they shall support, and they are composed of numbers of individuals who may all hold different opinions upon the subject of its application, or who may have various private interests and occupations, each of which may be more important to them than the common interest involved in parochial expenditure, or at variance with the means necessary for its judicious control, or the interest of each rate-payer may be so small, from the amount of his own contribution, that while the whole sum raised may be adequate to the purposes of enormous mischief, it will be indifferent to him in what mode it is expended; the interest, therefore, really in question, becomes that of the public at large, which, though it doubtless is that property should not be wasted or unjustly assessed, is also above all things that it should not be distributed in a mode calculated to suppress the virtuous or draw forth the evil qualities of the poor; the first result of leaving it to parishes to protect themselves in this matter, is certainly to array each of them in hostility to the other, each attempting to impose upon the other the charge which might otherwise attach to itself, and each exercising its own judgment as to the mode of advancing its interest; but with what prospect of equal advantage for themselves, or of uniform management for the benefit of the poor, this conflict is undertaken, will be learnt from the evidence which has now been obtained.

I have already referred in this Report to the degree of intelligence and education available for this purpose in an extensive agricultural district (North Devon.) The Statistical Table * appended to this Report will also show what provision is made for the discharge of the responsible and difficult office of superintending the poor in 66 parishes of the county of Worcester; the means which exist of defeating or of acquiring settlements in different parishes, according to circumstances, which are purely accidental, I shall presently refer to; the difference of opinion which prevails among the rate-payers in one parish, was a common reason assigned to me by the overseers for their own inefficiency; and when peculiar vigilance is displayed in one parish, it is often at the price of great injustice to another. Some overseers are guided in their removal of paupers, by the character of the parish into which they remove them; for though in some parishes the owners and occupiers of property are leagued together to resist the acquisition of settlements, others are unwilling to incur the expense of an appeal to the sessions; and while some parishes are prevented from appealing from the uncertainty of the law as applied by the magistrates, others calculate upon that circumstance in removing their

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C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Injustice of law contemplated by the law.

13th & 14th Cha. 2.

Effect of.

Reason assigned for continuance of law.

Statistical Table.

Reasons for removing paupers.

* This Table is drawn up by M. General Marriott, an active and useful magistrate, residing in the vale of Evesham, and who is well acquainted with the whole district to which it refers. He describes the overseers as being, for the most part, unable to read or keep accounts. This Table also shows the unequal manner in which neighbouring parishes contribute to the burthen of the poor.—See Note to Appendix, No. 3.

Appendix (A.)
 Reports.
 C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Unequal protection
 of parishes.

Ill effects of law
 shown by internal
 management of
 parishes.

Expense.

Appeals at War-
 wick Sessions.

Cases.
 North Devon.

Barristers who at-
 tend sessions.

Further conse-
 quences irreme-
 diable.

their paupers. A solicitor informed me at the last quarter sessions that I attended, that, from knowing the careless manner in which cases were got up in some parishes, and knowing the uncertainty which attends the decisions of the bench, he had lately advised a parish to resist an order of removal, in the case of a woman with nine children, without, as he said, the shadow of ground in law for the advice; and he considered that his opinion was in some degree justified by the result, since upon a division on the bench, nine magistrates were with him, and ten against him.* Many other facts might be stated to illustrate the acts of oppression and injustice which may be committed by parishes upon each other in their attempt to protect their separate interests. The internal management of parishes, however, as evidenced under this inquiry, will perhaps afford the best illustration of the general ill effects of this system, since it will here be seen that all the expedients which have tended the most to demoralize the people, such as the roundsman system, the labour-rate system, giving money without exacting labour, &c., have each been devised by parishes seeking to discover the best means of relieving themselves from the burthen of "their own poor." It is to serve the calculation of parish economy that frauds of various kinds are practised and encouraged. To reduce the rate for the current year is the one great object; the morals and good order of society are a distant consideration. Should a father desert his family, the cost of his pursuit or of his punishment is the only question in the parish. If single women become pregnant, marriages are effected indiscriminately to change the place of their settlement. If the bastard becomes chargeable, the offence of the woman is expiated by naming a man to indemnify the parish. If children are to be apprenticed, the residence, and not the character, of the master is ever considered in the parish. And when a settlement itself becomes a question at law, the premium which this system holds out to the commission of perjury, may be judged of by the uniform testimony borne by barristers who practise at the sessions, that upon no occasion is the offence committed in so flagrant and barefaced a manner.

But, independently of the mass of immorality which arises out of this system of maintaining the poor, there is another consequence which unites all persons against it, namely, the enormous expense which it occasions. The cost and inconvenience which attend the removal, the appeal against the removal, and the final decision upon the settlement of the pauper, is the grievance of every overseer. In nearly every parish that I examined, I found comparatively a large item in the accounts for removals, and litigation arising out of some questions of settlements. In some of the small agricultural parishes this amounted to 60*l.* 70*l.* and 80*l.* for the mere trial of an appeal; for each of which sums six, seven or eight persons might not only have been maintained, but employed in a house of industry, or have been assisted to settle in a colony. Mr. Power, a master manufacturer at Mancetter, in the county of Warwick, informed me, that he remembered 40 appeals being tried at one sessions, and that he had seen a calculation made at the time, by which it appeared that the interest upon the whole sum expended in litigating these claims, would have supported each family in question for the remainder of their lives. The overseer of the parish of Martinhoe, situate at the extremity of North Devon, informed me, that he had lately appealed against an order of removal of a man with a large family, made by the magistrates of Kingston-upon-Thames, a distance, perhaps, of not less than 220 miles, and that after travelling with the pauper and his other evidence to attend the quarter sessions at Kingston, owing to some informality in the order, the appeal was adjourned, and that he should be compelled to attend again at the following sessions; the expenses already incurred, he stated, had amounted to 150*l.* The return of the value of this parish in 1815, was 320*l.*

There is a fact, however, perhaps more instructive than the rest as to the vast expense occasioned to the country by the present law of settlement, namely, that four times in each year a very large proportion of the legal profession leave the metropolis to attend the quarter sessions in each county, and that the principal and most lucrative part of their business consists in what is termed the civil business arising out of settlement cases. In one of the counties that I visited, I was informed that the practice of the leader of the sessions alone was worth 400*l.* a year. When it is considered, therefore, that never less than four barristers are employed in each appeal, and that this occurs at the end of every quarter in the year, and when the expense of subordinate agency, witnesses journeys, &c. is also calculated, some notion may be formed of the extent of the grievance; and it should also be taken into consideration that a large portion of these sums are abstracted every quarter from the capital in different parishes, which might be devoted to the employment of labour, or from funds which might be applied to the purpose of education. This, then, is a sketch, though imperfect, of the general result of creating 14,654 separate interests to give effect to the objects and purposes of a law requiring great skill and judgment in its administration. There appear also to be two consequences resulting from the present law of settlement, which cannot be obviated by legislation, but are inseparable from the principle of this law itself. One is, its partial and injurious operation upon individual property; the other is, the impediment which it presents to the poor man in seeking the best market for his labour. It appears to be hardly possible to remedy the one without adding to the other of these evils. Whatever has tended, under the present system, to widen the field for the circulation of labour, has exposed the property of particular parishes to great and unequal burthens; and whatever protection has been afforded to

* The Rev. J. Foley, one of the magistrates for the county of Worcester, in his written statement, says, "Without meaning to cast any reflections on the proceedings in settlement cases, when we consider the number of magistrates who usually attend, the great inexperience of most of them in settlement cases, the influence which able counsel may possess over inexperienced minds, a solicitor will tell you that it is mere chance whether he succeeds or not."

to the occupiers of property in checking the easy acquisition of settlements, has been highly injurious to the labourer.

Repeated attempts have been made, for upwards of a century and a half, to legislate for these opposite purposes, and yet the present inquiry will probably show that little remains to be added to the present injury inflicted equally upon property and the poor.

The following acts, for instance, contain some of the provisions which have been enacted with this view, the 13th & 14th Charles II., the 9th & 10th Will. & Mary, and the 35th Geo. III. For the protection of parishes, the 13th & 14th Charles, provided, that all poor might be removed whenever they were expected to become chargeable, by which means a parish was enabled to provide against the incumbrances which casual residents might bring upon them. This, however, was the occasion of great cruelty and inconvenience to the poor. It was therefore provided by the 9th & 10th of Will. & Mary, that paupers bringing with them certificates from the last place of their settlement, should not be removable so long as the liability of that parish was continued under the certificate. Some parishes, however, being reluctant to grant these certificates, and many questions arising upon their general effect, it was further attempted to remove this restraint upon the circulation of labour by the 35th Geo. III. which provides, that paupers shall not be removed until they become actually chargeable, by which means parishes are now exposed to masses of people being attracted by local or temporary causes, and becoming chargeable for their maintenance upon property wholly inadequate to their support. The operation of this enactment, however, will perhaps be best illustrated in considering the particular circumstances under which settlements are now suffered to be acquired.

1.—*Hiring and Service for Twelve Months.*—As the law has been construed to apply to this mode of acquiring a settlement, no difference of opinion appears to be any where entertained as to the mischief which it occasions. It is at present the constant subject of an evasion, and the success of that evasion is a constant question at law. Some exception in the duration of the service is commonly made in the hiring for a year, in order to bring the contract within a class of cases decided in the King's Bench, which distinguish the hiring into conditional and exceptive, under the latter of which no settlement is acquired. The labourer is frequently not aware of the purport of the terms used by the master at the time of the engagement; he believes that he has acquired a settlement, which the master, being a rate-payer, often disputes, and the question before the court is frequently the words of the contract, made at any distance of time from the date of the appeal. The exception in the hiring usually consists of a few days in the course of the year, or of one week short of the 52, which the labourer is to have to himself. Even, however, when this is clearly understood by both parties, it is attended with great evil; it occasions frequent change of service, induces unsettled habits in the labourer, and weakens the attachment between master and servant.*

The practice of defeating settlements under hiring and service is every where justified. At Leamington the overseer produced a printed circular, which he was in the habit of sending round to the rate-payers every quarter, to caution them against hiring their servants for more than 51 weeks, and the common answer to my inquiry on the subject was, that the law was certainly evaded, but not so much as it ought to be. The uncertainty that must therefore attend the residence of any labourer in any place where he may seek employment, deters many, and especially the married men, who can claim allowance in their own parishes, from seeking to obtain work at a distance from them; should any stricter system than obtains at present be adopted in the distribution of relief, this restraint upon the circulation of labour should in justice be removed.

This is one of the modes by which property becomes so unequally burthened. In towns and parishes where there are many independent freeholders, the acquisition of settlements cannot be prevented; but when the property in a parish is owned by a single proprietor, its liability may be wholly evaded.

This may be exemplified by the four following parishes of Bagginton, Weston, Barford and Rowington, lying eight miles, in different directions, from the town of Warwick. The property in the parishes of Bagginton and Weston belong to two proprietors; it is chiefly occupied by their tenants, or their tradesmen, who are directed to prevent settlements from being acquired. In the parishes of Barford and Rowington, however, there are a number of small freeholders and independent tradesmen.

Bagginton contains 1,760 acres, and no male servant has acquired a settlement since 1812.

Weston contains 1,100 acres, and no male servant has here gained a settlement.†

Barford contains 1,660 acres; 26 servants have gained settlements since 1812, and have been relieved.

Rowington, 3,220 acres; 47 servants have gained settlements, and have been relieved.

* When a week in the year is excepted from the service, it usually occurs at the period of the statute fairs. These fairs collect the youth of both sexes and all characters together, and are the cause of great mischief in the rural districts. In some places I was assured that half of the bastardy cases could be traced to the period of their occurrence. They favour the opportunity for change of service, the absence of which is usually advantageous to both parties, and weakens the motive to good conduct during service, since masters who take servants from the fair are notoriously careless about their characters. The mischief which they occasion in various ways was much dwelt upon by several persons in the midland counties. It is said that they tend to brutalize the people, by herding them together like cattle, and that they have long since ceased to be of any real convenience to respectable masters; they are viewed as little else than nuisances at present in the country.

† One of the occupiers being refractory, suffered a few females to obtain settlements in this parish.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

2. By Apprenticeship.

Mischievous.

Neighbourhood of
Coventry.

Injustice.

Injurious to Ap-
prentices.

Source of litigation.

3. Marriage.

Immoral effects of,
as mode of Settle-
ment.

In Weston there is not a single labourer employed who has a settlement in the parish. It has been the policy of the parish for 30 years past to induce every labourer having a settlement to leave the parish, and only to employ those who had settlements in other parishes.

2.—*By Apprenticeship.*—Settlement acquired by a residence of 40 days under indentures of apprenticeship can hardly be considered less objectionable than the mode last mentioned. By this means individuals who are not rated in equal proportion with other rate-payers, have the means of encumbering a parish indefinitely with paupers. Manufacturers, for instance, settle in agricultural parishes, and collect together a population from the neighbourhood, and suffer them to acquire settlements while in their employ. They are not rated to the amount of their capital; and whenever they may remove their capital, or fail, the poor whom they have introduced become instantly chargeable upon the property of the parish.

There are many striking instances of this kind in the neighbourhood of Coventry, where middle masters contract to get work done for the manufacturers of Coventry, and take apprentices from the neighbouring parishes. In the parish of Bulkington, five miles from Coventry, all the people are engaged in ribbon-weaving, and the farmers are obliged to resort to other parishes to get labourers. The trade is at present bad, and the farmers are compelled to support the weavers out of the rates.

This is the case to great extent at Foleshill and at Nuneaton, where the population has been much collected from other parishes. I have appended a petition from the parish of Sowe, which will illustrate the degree in which this grievance is felt in that neighbourhood. In parishes where the property is much divided and in freehold tenure, the premium offered by neighbouring parishes will be a sufficient inducement with the tailors, shoemakers and carpenters to take any number of apprentices, while in parishes owned by a single or a few proprietors, the whole liability from this source may be evaded. This is illustrated from the four parishes whose different circumstances have been stated above.

In Baggington not one apprentice has gained a settlement since 1812.

In Barford 30 apprentices have gained settlements, and have been relieved.

In Weston not one apprentice has gained a settlement since 1812.

In Rowington 19 apprentices have gained settlements since 1812.

Apprenticeship is the mode by which parishes are best able to shift the settlements of their poor, and the premiums offered for this purpose often induce persons to take apprentices when they have no employment for them.

Mr. Bennett, of Tewkesbury, mentioned an instance of recent occurrence of this kind. A woman brought her two bastard children into the town, and married an Irishman, who called himself a shoemaker; he got a handsome premium from the parish where the bastards were born; he gave them settlements, taught them nothing, and they became chargeable. The quibbling to which questions of residence have given rise under this mode of settlement is familiar to any sessions' lawyer, and is notoriously a fertile source of litigation.

3.—*Marriage.*—Settlement derived from marriage is the occasion of those profligate unions before alluded to, which are encouraged by the overseer, with the view of shifting the settlement of single women when with child. The tricks and frauds resorted to by overseers for this purpose, imply at once a reluctance, or no inclination in one or both of the parties to be united. These marriages, defended by a narrow parochial policy, are often followed by disagreement between the parties, desertion by the man of his family, and a pauper progeny trained to follow in the steps of their parents; and it is manifest that though one parish may be relieved of a pauper, another parish will be encumbered, and the pauperism of the whole country increased.*

4.—*Birth,*

* The following cases, contained in a statement sent to me from Kenilworth, will show the expense and injustice which may also attend this mode of settlement:—

Some years ago Anne Heath, of this parish, married Joseph Taylor, of Castlecomb, in Wiltshire, by whom she had two children while living there with him, and one by another person. She then left Castlecomb, and returned to Kenilworth, and lived with a man of the name of Fry, a labourer out of Lancashire or Cheshire, by whom she had three children, who died in infancy. Fry having been committed to prison, during his confinement she married John Hewitt, a labourer of Kenilworth, by whom she has three children now living. Hewitt being imprisoned for poaching, she claimed relief for herself and children of the parish officers of this place, and who, at a great expense, searched out and apprehended Taylor, her first husband, and proved the marriage of the parties before a bench of magistrates, (both parties denying all previous knowledge of each other) who granted an order of removal for them into Wiltshire; the children going with them, were accepted by the parish officers of Castlecomb.

Upon Hewitt's time of imprisonment expiring, she joined him at Warwick, where they lived for about six months, when he being again imprisoned for sheep stealing, was transported last August assizes, and the parish officers of Warwick will have to go through the same expensive process as the officers of Kenilworth.

The first bench of magistrates before whom the parties were taken would not go into the case, and give us redress.

We have at this time the case of Sarah Mony, a married woman, who since her husband absconded has given birth to six children, and drawn regular relief from this parish. Some months ago Mony, the husband, was discovered near to Richmond, working as a blacksmith, having a woman living with him, by whom he has five or six children. There is great doubt as to whether the man belongs to this parish or Birmingham. The man states he has never been in this neighbourhood or seen his wife since he first left her, and the woman is quite willing to filiate the children, but the magistrates will not allow her, unless the parish officers can prove the non-access of the husband by other means, which is impossible, alleging that their compliance would enable any man and woman to throw the burden of their families upon other individuals, if so disposed.

4.—*Birth*.—Settlements derived from parents are not objected to under the present system, owing to the difficulty of finding any other circumstance by which to determine the liability of parishes to the support of children, and the prospect of shifting the settlement at present makes it less felt than it might otherwise be; but the simplicity of its proof, under an improved system of parochial registration, has led many persons to recommend the place of birth as the exclusive mode of determining settlement, since the litigation, expense and hardships to the poor, under the present system, would then be abolished; in truth, however, this would be not less wrong in principle than other modes, and is open to many of the same objections; it is the occasion at present of rate-payers and overseers preferring to employ men with families, that they prevent the families from becoming chargeable, a course which is known to increase the evil it intends to avert, by the encouragement which it offers to marriage; that would also take place should this change be adopted; but when all prospect of shifting the settlements of paupers would be precluded, it would be attended with greater evils than perhaps any other mode that could be exclusively adopted; it would lead to every species of fraud and device to escape the original liability; every means would be attempted to prevent births happening in one place, and to procure their happening in another, while the persons at whose expense the poor are supported, would perhaps, by this more than by any other system, be made to depend upon fraud or accident, for the burthen which they might be compelled to bear.

The operation of such a scheme might be illustrated at present from the working of the bastardy laws, numberless cases of which are probably before the Commission; one, however, with which overseers appeared to be familiar may be mentioned, namely, that single women who are pregnant, when near the time of their delivery, apply to them for the means of passing to an adjoining parish, which is readily granted, to avert the incumbrance which is threatened to fall on their own. Its effect, moreover, in parishes which offer any advantage to the poor, from charitable endowments, or special bequests, or temporary demand for labour is obvious. I may mention one instance which fell under my observation in the parish of Stone, near Kidderminster, where a bequest had been made by an individual many years since of a piece of land, the rent of which was to be distributed annually among the poor. The amount for many years was too trifling to have any influence upon the conduct of the poor. It was discovered, however, a few years since, that within the limits of this piece of land, was contained a peculiar clay, used in the manufacture of a china, which, from its rarity, is of great value. The value of the land has in consequence been greatly increased, and it has become of sufficient advantage to the poor, for them to be anxious to acquire and to retain their settlements in the parish, the result of which has been an addition to the poor-rates of 400*l.* per annum; though the overseer for the year informed me, that he remembered the time when there was scarcely one pauper regularly dependent upon the rate.

5.—*Tenements of the annual value of 10*l.**—These were said to be rarely occupied by persons who become chargeable to the parish; and much abuse does not seem to arise in the districts that I visited from the owners of such tenements conferring settlements upon non-parishioners from any improper motive. If assessments were made fairly upon the annual value of property, the owners made liable, and the rates strictly collected, the interest of the owners of these tenements would be too much identified with that of the parish, to make any abuse of this kind worth practising. In some places, however, I found it was made the means of serving a private purpose.

At Leamington I was informed that persons who speculated in buildings are used to let their houses for one year to mechanics and labourers, who are desirous of obtaining settlements in this parish, and who afterwards reside in the neighbouring villages to avoid the expense of living in the town. Many of the poor get good employment here in the summer months, and families are well taken care of, when deserted, during the remainder of the year. In country towns there are few cottages occupied by the poor of this value.

In the parish of Colneford, in North Devon, my attention was directed to a row of houses owned by one person, who threatened the parish to introduce tenants from other parishes, in the case of their being assessed to the poor-rate; and upon a calculation made of the increased burthen which this might probably occasion, the fraud is submitted to. If, however, parochial settlements are to continue, those acquired by holding a tenement at a *bonâ fide* rent of 10*l.* do not appear to be more objectionable than the others.

With regard to other modes of acquiring settlement, such as holding a yearly office in the parish, obtaining an estate of the value of 30*l.*, with some few others, the poor that become chargeable under them in these counties are, as I was informed, comparatively few in number, and these settlements are consequently not put forward so prominently as the other as matter of complaint. Settlement by estate is perhaps the mode most open to abuse, as by this means one parish may by conferring this qualification upon their own paupers procure them to be settled in another parish.

In whatever mode, however, settlements are now suffered to be acquired, their operation as a means of determining the liabilities of property for the support of a general burthen must be arbitrary and unequal; and I was unable to collect a single reason to justify the continuance of a system so discredited by experience, and so opposed to every principle recognized as just in taxation, beyond that which is afforded in the difficulty of substituting any better arrangement to give effect to the law.

As, however, the difficulty of effecting any change will depend much upon the popularity of the measure that is proposed, I may take this opportunity of stating that among all the

Appendix (A.)	plans which, during my inquiries, I have heard considered, there is none which appears to unite more opinions in its favour than that which has in view some uniform management, under a system of public control; and I may venture to express a confident opinion that any plan founded upon the principle of imposing upon the public at large the burthen of supporting what in that case would in justice be termed "its own poor," would either be much approved of or meet with little or no opposition from practical, intelligent and disinterested persons residing in the district that I visited, and that it would not be resisted in any other quarter with more vehemence than any temporary expedient or palliative measure, of which there are few persons who have not some to suggest of their own which they would prefer to be adopted, should the remedy proposed fall short of the change in principle contemplated above.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
The most popular plan.	
Two objections.	Two objections alone were urged to such a change, and those indeed by persons who were ready to admit the advantage of a public system of maintaining the poor in every other respect. One of these, as opposed to a measure of public policy, is perhaps scarcely deserving of mention; it is still, however, urged by influential persons, and must be considered; it consists of a supposed injustice in compelling parishes to contribute in future to the support of the poor, which by some accident or skilful management have hitherto evaded the charge. The argument, however, which is here intended against a change for the public advantage is the same which may be urged upon the question of repealing or enacting any law whatever, however partial or oppressive, since there are few laws, or abuses of laws, which are too bad for some persons not to derive an advantage from their existence; it has been shown that the ground upon which the claim to exemption arises often results from fraud and oppression, and that advantage is gained rather by evading the intention of the law than profiting fairly from its provisions. It was never intended that all the labourers required for one parish should be procured from another, while all liability for their support when out of employ should fall upon the latter. If the law had any principle in view, it was that the old and infirm should be maintained from the profits of the ground on which they had laboured when in vigour and youth: the claim to immunity therefore, in such a case, would, in fact, amount to a right to evade the law in future, from having hitherto effected it with success; the objection itself, however, might be equally advanced against general protection, upon the ground that safety is enjoyed by a few, which in this day will scarcely be considered as tenable.
First.	
Answer to.	
Second.	The other is more plausible in its character, and has, doubtless, some ground in the general experience which this country has acquired in matters that are somewhat analogous; namely, that a public system of providing for the poor would be made the subject of political or private jobbing, and that from the want of strong individual interests, the funds raised for this purpose would be wasted or misapplied.
Answer to.	This objection was certainly not urged by any persons with whom I conversed with any prejudice against change, but, on the contrary, with a strong desire that their apprehensions on this account might be allayed by the securities which should be provided. But, as an argument to be urged against any substitute for the present system, it is indeed somewhat remarkable, as its manifold evils have precisely resulted from trusting to local individual interests for an honest and judicious application of the law, and this indeed is at once the answer to any similar objection urged against a national system of maintaining the poor. The experiment of local and independent management has been tried for upwards of two centuries, and from every word of evidence which I was able to collect, corresponding I believe with that which has been obtained from other quarters, it is shown to have totally failed; consequently, a far better prospect is presented for the interests of the poor and the property of the country, in the appointment of paid, permanent and competent officers, all subject to one system of public control, than in the continuance of the present source of misery and discontent in the capricious and ignorant, though gratuitous, exercise of local and irresponsible authority.
Objects of national system.	The great objects which a national system might be expected to accomplish, would be a more equal assessment of property, a more regular and uniform system of management, and a more judicious distribution of relief to the poor. For these purposes the present division of the country into parishes and townships offer no advantage whatever. Their extreme inequality in every point of comparison would rather complicate than assist any national arrangements, and an injudicious attempt, which might still be made by them to promote their separate interests, might be attended with the same consequences which have been observed heretofore. A repeal, therefore, of all the laws which impose upon these irregular divisions of the country any distinct liability to maintain the poor that may settle within them, appears to be almost a condition of any permanent improvement. Districts might then with facility be defined, not subject to any special liability for the maintenance of the poor, but determined in extent by local circumstances, with a view to the arrangements requisite for awarding relief, upon principles to be deduced from the evidence now collected upon the subject. The leading principles here referred to may be stated, as—
Repeal of Laws of Settlement.	1st.—That no able-bodied person shall receive relief while in the employment of individuals.
Districts.	2dly.—That no pauper shall be relieved in any manner, by which his condition shall be made equal to or better than that of the independent poor.
Principles.	All ground for confining the legal claim to relief to particular places would thus be removed; since no special liability attaching to the district, no injustice would be inflicted upon property, and the mode of relief being uniform, no inducement would be offered to paupers to seek relief in one place rather than another.
Necessity of Settlement dispensed with.	

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To frame regulations for the administration of a system proceeding upon these principles, and to secure its permanent and uniform adoption throughout the country, the establishment of some central authority would of necessity be required; and for this purpose it will be doubtless expedient that a Board, composed of few persons, recommended by their known efficiency, should be constituted, to be invested with complete control in the general execution of Poor Laws, and subjected to every responsibility which attaches to any other department of the state.

As a means immediately of carrying into effect a public system upon these principles above stated, it would be desirable that an establishment should be formed within each district, of which the leading features may be described as follows:

1st.—A house for the reception of the poor, with all the arrangements requisite for a classification of the inmates according to their age, sex and occupation.

2dly.—The means of providing employment of some description to every able-bodied applicant as a condition attached to relief.

3dly.—An office for the registry of all matter connected with the public support of the poor, in which the accounts should be kept, upon the principle of affording complete evidence of the precise application of all the relief granted.

4thly.—A paid and permanent officer to superintend the district, receiving his instructions from the central Board, and having authority over all subordinate officers appointed in the district.

1st.—*House*.—The convenience and economy of maintaining the poor within a single building, under judicious regulations, is too well established by experiment to need any comment upon its importance in any future system of management, and the general desire which exists for such establishments throughout these counties, I have before alluded to.

2dly.—*Employment*.—Judging from my own experience under this inquiry, I should say that the economy of providing work, without reference to its productiveness, as a means of deterring the idle or the deceitful from seeking relief, is no less established.

The theory upon which persons have proceeded who have been most successful in dispauperising their parishes, is that pauperism is less occasioned by misfortune or inevitable distress than by mismanagement and an injudicious application of parish funds, and that if the poor are properly encouraged to seek employment for themselves, that they would be able to procure it. With few exceptions, the result of my inquiries tend to show that grounds for this opinion exist throughout all the districts that I visited. If this is the case generally, the productiveness of the work would be of little consequence, since its operation upon the conduct of the poor would amply repay the outlay it might occasion at first; but the profit of the labourer need not necessarily be overlooked; it would, however, be far better that it should be lost sight of entirely, than that the employment of industrious and independent poor should be intruded upon. It has been suggested in an answer to one of the queries, that there are public stores for which there would be a demand in the country at a future time, which might be produced by pauper labour, with advantage to the country, and without injury to the independent labourer of this generation. Upon this, however, I do not mean to express an opinion; but employment of some kind should without doubt be provided, and it would be desirable that within large agricultural districts there should be separate stations appointed for overseers, and at each of them the means of offering to every able applicant some description of work as a condition of his obtaining relief. A report of every such applicant being sent to the superintendent, it might be in his discretion, should the pauper continue dependent, in what other mode he should be relieved, whether in or out of the house, &c. and communication being maintained between the superintendent and the central board, and between the latter and other public departments, it would not be difficult to provide regular employment for such persons who are redundant, as regards the capital of a particular place, by distributing them in places where there was a demand for labour. There appears, indeed, to be no sound objection to the employment of able men seeking public alms in any branch of the national service in which their labour might be rendered useful; the army,* the navy, or the public works of any kind, might each be open to persons unable to provide for themselves.

A degree of uncertainty attending the particular employment which might be offered to any able applicant, would in one respect be advantageous, since it would tend to prevent any calculation on the part of the idle for the purpose of evading the operation of the system.

3dly.—*Office*.—The necessity of keeping the accounts so as to afford the clearest evidence of the mode in which every shilling has been expended needs no remark; and the manner in which this should be effected, with regard to the maintenance of the poor, will probably be collected with far greater advantage from different sources in the metropolis, than could possibly be obtained from the provincial districts. I do not, therefore, offer any suggestion on this

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Central board.

District establishment.

Means of working general system.

House.

Employment.

Advantageous without being productive.

Suggestion by respondent.

Overseers stations.

Reports.

Paupers to be employed in public service.

Advantage of employments being various.

Office.

Manner of keeping accounts.

* I was led to consider that this might be rendered available, from having examined a recruiting sergeant, whom I found in one town, as to the difficulty which he had in procuring men to enlist. He informed me that it was very considerable indeed in that part of the country, though in a town not more than 16 miles from this place, the solicitor to the parish informed me that he had frequently seen between 50 and 60 strong able men standing in the market-place, and each receiving an allowance in money from the parish, and doing nothing. In Devonshire also I saw some men who were being sent on the billet, at 7d. a day, between the ages of 20 and 40, amongst the finest and stoutest men in the parish.

Appendix (A.)	this head, from concluding that the Commission is already in possession of the most complete method for this purpose. It would be of great advantage that statistical information of various sorts, connected with the working people, should also be collected and properly classified in the district office. The evidence thus collected, by affording information as to the relative proportions of capital and labour, and being accessible to the public, would be of great advantage to the poor themselves, especially to those who are honestly desirous of escaping from a dependence on charity, as informing them of the means which exist of their procuring employment. It will be observed, in my report upon Warwickshire, that in one part of the county there is a positive dearth of labourers, while in other parts they are being sent on the round on the plea of their being superfluous in the parish. It would also be the means of opposing a satisfactory check to the appeals to private charity by the idle and ill-disposed.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	
Statistical information to be collected.	
Superintendent.	4thly.— <i>Superintendent</i> .—There is, perhaps, no fact better supported by evidence, than the advantage of a single judgment acting in the management of the poor as opposed to that of many, and of a permanent officer as opposed to one acting for short and limited periods. The advantage of an intelligent person, having other requisite qualifications, acting in this capacity under the directions of the Central Board, and to whom subordinate officers should refer for their instructions, cannot therefore be doubted. To these functionaries the Central Board would look for all requisite information connected with the districts, and, from their responsibility and their experience, they might be the means at once of relieving the magistrates of the most painful part of their present jurisdiction, in arbitrating between the overseers and the poor. It can hardly be doubted that persons sufficiently qualified for this office might be procured for a moderate salary, when it is considered for what small stipends educated and competent persons are found to officiate as ministers of religion, and also for what moderate salaries men have been found ready to quit this country and reside in a climate comparatively unhealthy, and who have yet been deemed competent to be invested with the full powers of a magistrate.
Advantage of, supported by evidence.	These outlines of a scheme are framed with a view of meeting the great evils of the present system, which if the evidence be consulted, will be found to consist in the arbitrary and complicated modes of settlement, and the inadequate and injudicious system of management arising out of it. The details of the scheme, and the minor difficulties attending its adoption, might be subsequently settled with reference to local peculiarities, under the direction of the Central Board.
Competent persons, with moderate salaries, easily procured.	Should it be thought that a division of the country into districts for this purpose would be attended with difficulty, it might be answered that it would require little further trouble than is now frequently occasioned under the 9th and 10th of Geo. IV. by which counties may be divided for magisterial purposes.
Details of scheme to be arranged by Central Board.	The whole county of Worcester was lately redivided under this Act, and one extensive district including 66 parishes, situate in different Hundreds, for the purpose of the petty sessions, was marked out by one magistrate alone,* whose local acquaintance with the county enabled him to accomplish it with little difficulty to himself, and for the great advantage and convenience of the parishes comprised within it. The petty sessions are held once a week in the town of Pershore, and all matters between the poor and their parishes are then and there decided. I have already alluded to the results of an intelligent management of the poor in one parish of the town of Pershore; it is not easy therefore to understand why, if a better system was adopted over the whole district, that the same results should not equally follow; indeed the district being at present defined, an opportunity is almost offered for an experiment. A superintendent might be appointed, a workhouse for the district might be erected, and the means of employing the surplus labour provided, if it should be found that any such surplus existed.
Districts easily defined.	With what facility, however, a new district might be defined, may be learned from the time and the manner in which a more complicated arrangement was accomplished by a few intelligent persons in fixing the boundaries of counties and boroughs for electoral purposes.
Boundary commissioners.	It was, indeed, suggested to me by the overseer of most experience that I met with in the north of Devon, that the present division of that part of the county might, in reference to the poor, be submitted to a system of public management; and he expressed a confident opinion that if any uniform system was adopted throughout the division, that two well-qualified persons would be amply sufficient for its superintendence, and that four persons would be sufficient for the superintendence of the whole county, with one public office for keeping all the accounts connected with its pauper expenditure. The northern division is peculiarly favourable for an experiment being made, since there is good reason to believe that the people are not redundant as regards the whole division, and there is greater uniformity in the general character of the people than in any other district of equal extent. One or more houses for the reception of the poor of various kinds might here also be erected, and stations fixed for paid officers, with the means of providing able paupers with occupation during the period of their being relieved.
North Devon. Opportunity for experiment.	The objection of expense will probably be raised to the adoption of this or of any other scheme that is proposed. It behoves those, however, who would object to an experiment on this ground, to consider well at what cost to the country the poor are, under the present system, pauperized and degraded. For though by any stretch of calculation it should be made to appear, that under any improved system that is proposed, the present expenses would not be diminished, the advantage of the measure would still have to be estimated by its general
Objection of expense.	

* Major-General Marriott.

general results upon the habits of the people, and it must be remembered that the scheme has for its object rather to prevent the existence of pauperism than to provide the means for its continual support or increase.

But should obstacles, on the ground of expense, be cast in the way of arrangements that are requisite for this purpose, no more hope certainly can be entertained from the management of the poor under a national system than is afforded at present by a continuance of the parochial system. It is at present the common excuse in small parishes for not adopting a change which they admit to be useful, and which might save them from ruin, that the rate-payers cannot, or will not, incur the requisite expense. This was a common reply made to me by overseers, upon the suggestion of preparing their workhouses for the reception of a greater number of poor, and it is the ground upon which the relief of able men in the employ of individuals is thought to be justified: the parishes, it is said, cannot afford to give employment to paupers which is not productive, and hence all paid in wages is considered a saving: thus, however, millions are wasted with a view to economy. It is this which affords the strong ground for public interference, and it would indeed disappoint the expectation of its advantage, should it be attended with a repetition of a similar error.

The question, however, of chief importance which remains to be considered is, whether the funds from which the expenses of maintaining the poor under national management are to be defrayed should be raised by a local or a general assessment.

To a local tax, to meet the exigencies of the poor seeking relief within the district in which it is raised, the obvious objection arises, that as a tax to support a general burthen, its operation upon property at large would be extremely unequal, and precisely for the same reason that it operates unequally at present, namely, that being charged upon localities whose circumstances are different and ever fluctuating, with regard both to property and population, it must be the occasion at times of great oppression. It is also inexpedient on another account, since frauds would be practised and expedients devised by the payers in the district, to avoid the unequal burthen which the particular liability might occasion, and if they accomplished their object in reducing the rate; this might be as the same system has hitherto been, extremely injurious to the poor.

It is suggested, in a reply* to one of the queries circulated by the Board in these counties, that property should still be rated as it is at present, and that the proportion in the pound upon the whole value of the kingdom necessary to the maintenance of the poor should be ascertained at the end of the year, and the charge in each district for the support of the poor should be equally adjusted accordingly. This might doubtless be done without difficulty by the annual value of all property assessed to the poor rate being known, as well as the amount of the sums expended in each separate district. It cannot be denied, however, that a public provision for those who are unable to maintain themselves is a national institution intended for the benefit not only of those individuals, but of society at large, and not less in one portion of the country than in the other, and one which has an equal claim upon the resources of the country with the army, the navy, or the public pensioners; and perhaps there is no charge which could be more appropriately or popularly defrayed out of the public taxes† than that of the maintenance of the poor. This would best secure a contribution from property of every description, the liabilities of which would not then be exposed to greater inequality than occurs at present in the support of any other public burthen. It would also most effectually preclude all the local and financial calculations respecting the employment and treatment of the poor by private individuals, which occur at present, and have proved so productive of mischief. The contract between master and servant would then become really unfettered; the labourer would be hired and paid for the value of his service, and not for the number of his children; the master would cease to be taunted with his obligation equally to support servants whether idle or industrious, and labourers would seek to merit the good-will of their masters, from their feeling that he is released from such an obligation. It is said that this would equally be effected if the assessment was made upon the county. This, however, may be doubted; at all events there seems to be no valid or sufficient objection to the liability of the public to support its own poor being determined in the mode above stated. The House of Commons controls the public purse, and paupers are excluded from the constituency. No improper influence in that quarter need therefore be apprehended. Every officer engaged in the service would be rendered strictly responsible. The Central Board would be made amenable to Parliament, and an annual report of their past expenditure and of the system upon which it is applied, would precede the vote for the sums which they might annually demand, which would thus, in fact, carry into effect the plan proposed by Mr. Pitt, "that an annual budget should be opened to Parliament, detailing the proceedings of those who were intrusted with the execution of the Poor Laws."

I should, perhaps, apologize to the Commission for the intrusion of my own suggestions upon the important question of the amendments of the system which they are called upon to propose,

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Advantage of public system defeated by false economy.

Funds out of which poor are to be supported.

Objections to local tax.

Plan for equal assessment.

More just that the poor should be maintained from the same sources as other national burthens.

No fear of improper influence.

* Mr. Power, of Atherstone.

† It is an advantage not to be overlooked in supplying the funds for the maintenance of the poor from this source, that it is the certain mode of directing public attention to the manner in which they are applied. 100*l.* misapplied, which has been raised by public taxation, calls forth an expression of opinion from one part of the country to the other; while millions may be annually mispent if derived from a local source, without exciting a tithe of this interest in the public mind; the mode in which the county rate is raised and expended shows this.

Appendix (A.)	propose, but as the principles upon which they are founded, namely, national assessment and public management, were so strongly and frequently impressed upon me by all intelligent persons in these counties who had considered the subject, they will, I trust, not be considered misplaced.
Reports.	
C. P. Villiers, Esq.	With regard to those measures which are suggested in the Instructions, as likely to attend and promote an improved system of managing the poor, I did not receive any evidence in favour of their operating with any real or permanent advantage to the poor.
Measures likely to attend a better system.	
Emigration.	<i>Emigration.</i> —There have been but few instances of emigration among the working classes in Warwickshire and Worcestershire, and I heard of none in which the emigrants had prospered. Those who have emigrated have been, usually, persons either of unsteady character, who have not been able permanently to adapt themselves to the new country, or who have gone to places where there was no demand for labour in the trade to which they belonged, or they have been single cases of paupers and their families, whose expenses of settling have been defrayed by their parishes, and who have speedily returned, professing their inability to procure regular employment. At Leamington, a very intelligent mechanic, earning high wages, but dissatisfied with his prospects in this country, left his trade with a view of settling in the United States; after exploring the country for some time, he addressed a letter from New York to a gentleman in Warwickshire, which he requested might be published, and in which he denounced in the strongest terms any scheme of emigration with a view of improving the condition of his countrymen, which he grounded upon his personal experience and observation since his arrival; he declared himself completely disappointed, and expressed an intention of returning.
Cases.	
Warwickshire.	At Kidderminster nearly 100 of the carpet-weavers had quitted the town, with the hope of finding employment at New York, in which having been disappointed, many of them returned, and those that remained were said to have fared ill.
Worcestershire.	In the hundred of Upper Slaughter, in Gloucestershire, two or three cases were mentioned to me where labourers had been sent to Quebec with their families, but they returned within 18 months, giving a discouraging account of prospects afforded to labourers in the colony.
Gloucestershire.	Upon the whole I met with few persons in these counties who considered that emigration, as a scheme to diminish the amount of pauperism, would afford a substantial remedy for the evil. A general redundancy of people is every where denied, and wherever there may be local congestion of the people, the remedy is considered to be nearer home than in the transport of a certain number of paupers to another country: there is, consequently, no disposition whatever in parishes that I visited, to defray the costs of emigration and expenses of settling out of the poor-rates. While paupers who emigrate are suffered to retain their settlements in this country, parishes which defray the expense of their outfit are exposed to a positive loss by their return; and it is said, and doubtless with some truth, that the circumstance of the pauper knowing that he may return to his place of settlement, makes him less anxious to exert himself to succeed in the colony; at the same time, if they were not allowed to retain their settlement, it would be considered a hardship. It must indeed be allowed, that if there is clear evidence that the pauperism of this country arises chiefly from the encouragement which is held out to the idle and vicious propensities of the labouring class, by the mode of administering parochial relief, that the Legislature ought rather to engage itself in removing the cause than in supplying a temporary and doubtful remedy for one of its effects.
No disposition in parishes to defray the cost of emigration.	
Emigrants return who are suffered to retain settlement.	In the northern division of Devon, an opposite feeling from that in the midland counties prevails, both among the labourers and the farmers, respecting emigration. There is a very strong disposition on the part of both to settle in the colonies, and many instances were mentioned to me of its having occurred. The facilities afforded by the ports in this country for embarkation, have tempted many of the farmers, under the pressure of the times, to make the experiment, and their success has operated as an inducement to others. The example also afforded by the emigration of men of capital and substantial farmers, has tended in a great degree to remove all prejudice among the poor against quitting their country. From what I was able to collect, the balance of cases appears to be about equal in which the emigrants from this part of the country have prospered or failed. Where the farmers have failed, it has been chiefly from their disinclination to the inconvenience and delay to which all emigrants who have to clear the land are exposed, and they have returned after suffering considerable loss. In other instances they have gone upon imperfect information with respect to the colony, and with exaggerated expectations of the advantages which it offered; such has been the case with those who have gone to Prince Edward's Island, and they have ruined themselves in an ineffectual attempt to apply their capital profitably; or else they have been men of unsteady habits. When they have succeeded, they have generally settled in Upper Canada, or New Brunswick, and have followed some friends or relations who, being settled there, have furnished them with all requisite information as to their arrangements upon coming out and settling.
North Devon.	
Emigration popular.	
Why farmers have failed.	
Prince Edward's Island.	
Where they have succeeded.	
Case.	Where they have, perhaps, succeeded with least trouble, is when they have had sufficient capital to purchase cleared land in cultivation in the United States. The case of a farmer who left South Molton, is a striking instance of this kind; he purchased a farm in the New York State, and the accounts which he has sent of his present condition and prospects are most encouraging. He speaks with great satisfaction of the step that he had taken in leaving this country. The letter, however, which I have appended, written from St. Thomas, in Upper Canada, shows that farmers leaving this country with some capital, and settling in that district, may easily prosper; and looking to the state of their prospects in many counties of England, their condition will doubtless appear to be much improved by removing to that country.

Amongst the working classes, those who have emigrated with most success have been carpenters, masons, bricklayers and artificers of different kinds, whose trades are immediately connected with the wants of a new country. These men have gone to Halifax, Quebec, Canada, and the accounts which they have written home show that they are prospering. One carpenter, who left the parish of Bow, had been able to build a house, which he was then letting for 60 guineas a year; and his accounts were so flourishing, that nearly 40 people had determined, upon the receipt of his letter, to leave the parish to settle in Halifax, but reports having arrived of the cholera breaking out in that town, they were deterred from doing so. Where the mechanics have failed, it has in most cases been owing to accident or misconduct on their part. The masons who went out to Halifax in the beginning of this year (1832), had suffered much from an unusually hard winter, otherwise they would have been employed.

The agricultural labourers have succeeded best when they have emigrated with the capitalist, and have been able to remain in his employment, or when they have joined friends and relations previously settled there, who have put them in the way of getting employment at once. The farmer I have alluded to from South Molton, took out his whole establishment, males and females, with him; and they had written to all their relations advising them to come over, as there was plenty of employment to be procured; upwards of thirty had gone out.

In several parishes the expenses of emigration have been paid for paupers, but, generally speaking, it had not answered to the parish, for they had returned. Paupers are seldom industrious, and are for the most part without the energy requisite for prospering in a new country; consequently those who generally succeed and go voluntarily are the able, industrious men, desirous of avoiding pauperism in this country.

The result of my inquiries in this county satisfied me, that if any facilities were offered by the Government to the emigration of the labourers, that there would be numbers who would readily avail themselves of them; and there can be little doubt that the labourers might be located in Upper Canada or New Brunswick, with every prospect of improving the condition which they enjoy in this country, and that the immediate consequences would be beneficial to some parishes where the poor are being maintained in idleness out of the poor-rate. The policy, however, of the Government offering any facilities for this purpose, must be considered extremely doubtful, as will be shown by considering the circumstances of North Devon, a county which would afford the freest scope for its operation; there the people are desirous of emigrating; they are familiar with favourable reports from the colonies; and notwithstanding the accidents which attend emigration at present, there is a strong impression that an improvement in their condition would result from it: if the Government were to offer them a free passage to place them in an advantageous colony, the plan would be still more favourably regarded. The ground, however, upon which the poor would claim to avail themselves of those facilities afforded to emigration, would be the same as that on which parochial relief is afforded in this country; namely, destitution or an inability to procure employment. This would equally apply to the idle and the industrious; there would therefore be no disgrace attaching to emigration under these circumstances. If, however, it would not be disgraceful, and it would also be advantageous to be so transported, and that the claim to receive this assistance would be founded upon not having the means of support in this country. What motive, it may be asked, would be left to a man to avoid that condition? There is not a given fixed quantity of destitution in this country; it is caused or prevented by circumstances, the most powerful of which are to be found in the habits and character of individuals; and these again are determined by circumstances and causes extrinsic to themselves. Now the operation of the Poor Laws under their present application, has been to prevent all habits of forethought and self-dependence from being formed amongst the poor; and they have produced this effect, by teaching them that they will be relieved precisely according to their necessities; that the greater the necessity the greater would be the relief. But any facilities afforded to the poor to emigrate to a foreign country to which they are desirous of going, must be afforded upon the same principle of relieving them according to their necessities, and all the evil influences upon their moral and physical condition, which are observed at present to follow from the Poor Laws, would be encouraged and strengthened. Early marriages, large families, desertion of families, all would again be induced; and the motive to them would be so far stronger, that the reward for improvidence and incontinence would be still higher. Instances already were mentioned to me in Devon,* when men, upon being reprovved for their misconduct, have expressed perfect indifference from their reliance on emigration. What, therefore, occurs now in this county when emigration is popular, would soon occur in other parts of the country, when, through increased facilities, it had become popular there also. I am disposed, therefore, to think that any public provision for settling men in the colonies, where they may earn high wages and improve their condition, upon the ground that they are unable to procure employment or maintain their large families in this country, would not only be attended with equal, but with greater mischief than is caused now by the present administration of the Poor Laws; and that any such provision would, under the present system of maintaining the poor, have the effect of depriving this country of its best and most industrious labourers, or under any stricter system, of operating as a bounty upon all the causes of distress which are to be traced to idleness and improvidence. It appears that great evils which attend emigration at present, might be prevented by

Case.

Pauper emigrants.

The policy of Government offering facilities to emigration considered.

Conclusion against.

Mode by which evil might be prevented.

* The answer of one man who was reproached by a magistrate for neglecting his family was, "Well, Sir, I don't care, I can go to 'Merica; I'd sooner be there than here."

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

authentic information being furnished to every parish of the real character and condition of our colonies, as they regard the prospects of the working classes who emigrate to them. This might be usefully done by the Government, and would prevent the people being misled by the gross misrepresentations which are now frequently made for interested purposes, and prove the cause of severe suffering and great waste of property. In the north of Devon both the farmers and the poor are frequently misled into settling in Prince Edward's Island, which is known to present every disadvantage to the settlers; and from the total want of any authentic information on the subject (which I found every where to be the case), they are left at the mercy of captains of vessels or persons whom they employ, who are not unapt, as I am told, to misrepresent the state of this island, from their being able to repeat the voyage oftener on account of the distance, and are therefore desirous of tempting settlers to emigrate to that colony.

Allotments of Land.

Allotments of Land.

The practice of allotting small portions of land to labourers in general, but especially to those with families, I found to be generally recommended by well-intentioned persons, with a view of improving the condition of the poor. The parties who had been instrumental to its adoption, in many cases referred me to the results in proof of its success. I heard arguments in its favour from landowners, tradespeople and labourers; Sir E. Wilmot said, that he had adopted the plan in his parish, and that it had been followed by great improvement in the condition of the labourers; and he seemed to consider that by its more general adoption, many of the evils arising from the administration of the Poor Laws would at once be remedied. Mr. Bracebridge, of Atherstone Hall, was of the same opinion. At Rugby many labourers, who had before been dependent on the parish, were now living, supporting themselves on their wages, assisted by a plot of ground, on which they grew potatoes and wheat. At Coughton Sir John Throckmorton had allotted plots of land within the last two years to his labourers, and the rates had in that time been reduced two-fifths; and instances were cited to me of men of drunken habits, who had been reclaimed, apparently by the occupation and interest afforded them by their allotment.

Beneficial effects
said to be derived
from.

Sir Thomas Philips, at Broadway, in Worcestershire, had let a considerable extent of ground to his labourers, some of whom had derived great advantage from the measure. Mr. Pole, a gentleman residing near Stow-on-the-Wold, bore testimony to the good effects of the system, in the case of many industrious labourers in his parish of Risington.

Quantity which a
labourer can culti-
vate without preju-
dice to his service.

I found it to be the common opinion, that the quantity of land which a man could cultivate for himself, without interfering with his service as a labourer, was one-fourth of an acre.* In rightly estimating, however, the merits of this system, it is necessary to ascertain the terms on which these portions of land are let. At Rugby, I was informed that if the farmers were to let the land to the labourers they would require 8*l.* per acre; whereas the society formed for the purpose of letting out land, only received 4*l.* and the occupiers were not rated; also, that as the labourers thus acquired an advantage, the preference was usually given to men with large families. So in almost every other place where this plan had been adopted, it appeared that some assistance was afforded to the labourer to enable him to obtain the expected benefit from his allotment. It was either let to him at a lower rent, or a loan of some kind was made to him, or he was not rated, as was the case in Sir T. Philips's parish. Upon asking the labourers what was their opinion of the system, I found them universally well pleased with the principle of having land granted them for their own use; but in almost all cases they were dissatisfied with the quantity they received. Thus at Napton, when the Rev. Mr. Bromefield had spoken to me upon the good effects of the system in his parish, he desired the sexton, who I understood had an allotment himself, to inform me what was thought of it by the labourers generally. He said they were well pleased to have land, but wanted sadly to have some more, and until they had, he did not think it would do much good. He was asked how much he thought would satisfy them, and replied, about five acres would do nicely, that a man would then keep off the parish; and that as for the capital to be expended on the land, he said the labourers would club together, and keep a team and plough amongst them. Sir T. Philips invited me to witness the labourers paying their rent. They each brought samples of wheat which they had grown upon their half acre; and though satisfied so far with the result, they, without exception, in my presence, asked for more land to be allowed them, and repeatedly pressed their demand. I afterwards examined the overseer of the parish in which these labourers resided, as to whether they had all abstained from the parish in consequence of their allotments, but on referring to his books, he showed me the names of some of them who had recently applied for relief, which, for fear of the whole families coming upon the parish, he had been obliged to grant. In a letter, moreover, received from this parish, I am informed that since I was there, "some of these men had endeavoured to force the overseers to pay the rent of their houses, on the plea that they had been at great expense in cultivating their half acre; and one went to a magistrate to demand it." At Holsworthy, I inquired into the effects of the allotment system pursued by Lord Stanhope. I found that the allotments had for the most part, been granted on very advantageous terms, and in quantity so large as to render the occupier very nearly independent of labour. The portions, for the most part, varied from six to fifteen acres, and an instance was mentioned to me of one individual who held 23 acres. The land was granted upon leases of 15 years, and the occupiers were, in most instances, required

Assistance usually
given to enable
labourers to culti-
vate the allotment.

Scheme for pro-
curing requisite
capital.
Labourers not con-
tent with half an
acre.

Lord Stanhope's
allotments.

From six to fifteen
acres.

* The time which it has been computed that a labourer should devote to the cultivation of a quarter of an acre is as follows: In January, 19 hours; February, 16 hours; March, 12; April, 14; May, 6; June, 3; July, 2; August, 5; September, 2; October, 20; November, 12; December, 12; in all 123.

required to erect a dwelling for themselves, with such outbuildings as were necessary for the management of the land. The plan was commenced in 1818, and the surveyor says, that "the most trying time for the noble Earl's generosity to have the effect which was intended, will be when the rent comes to be fixed for another term, on the expiration of the present." He also in his statement points out some of the evil effects of this system if generally adopted. "If such allotments," he says, "were by piecemeal to be paired off from the farms, the consequence would be most detrimental to the farmer; it might be required of him to surrender his best field to any of his labourers who might choose to solicit it, or it might be required of him to surrender so large a portion of it that the remainder might not be worth holding, or a variety of other cases might arise alike injurious to him." He mentions, however, some instances of the successful operation of the system upon individuals, though in others it had failed, as in the case of a cordwainer, who was tempted by the offer of a little land to forsake his trade, and turn farmer, being without any knowledge on agricultural matters.*

I have before alluded to the condition of Holsworthy, and to the evidence of a labourer himself, as to the evils of allowing the poor to build cottages upon the waste, paying only a nominal rent, in its tendency to promote early marriage, "for people thought themselves provided for, he said, when they had a house."

I met with many persons whose experience and attention to the subject entitle their opinions to respect, who without disapproving of the principle of this system, were but little sanguine in their expectation of any general or permanent advantage from it. At the same time they admitted that it might afford some relief to many honest and industrious labourers, who suffer from the unjust and oppressive influence of the Poor Laws, as at present administered; and also that if accompanied by any stimulus to exertion, under a stricter application of these laws, its moral effect might, perhaps, be of service in restoring the spirit of independence† and habits of industry which once belonged to the English peasantry. Some persons, on the other hand, with whom I communicated, were opposed to it on principle. They said, that as generally held, it was of the nature of charity, and consequently tended to divert the labourer from dependence on his own exertions, and induced him to look to other sources of support besides his labour; that there was no security against its abuse,‡ no security that it would not be employed in relieving the idle, the worthless and the self-indulgent, with large families, the most necessitous as they would be called, and not the most deserving. These objections relate exclusively to the poor themselves, but the mischief that would be caused ultimately, under this system, by the infinite subdivision of farms, and their occupation by men without capital, must surely not be overlooked in considering the propriety of its general adoption.

Taxation on Domestic Servants.

From the information that I was able to collect, the tax on domestic servants does not operate in preventing the residence of farming labourers with their employers. The arrangements made in parishes for the relief of the poor is the cause usually assigned for the discontinuance of this practice, which in former times is said to have been common. The payment of wages out of the rates tempts the farmer to procure his labourer from the overseer, and the system of allowance renders it convenient to the labourer to live apart from his employer. It was the opinion of several persons that I examined, that this tax deters many who live in towns from keeping servants, though their circumstances might admit of their doing so.

Taxation on Domestic Servants.

Rural Police.

According to the directions of the Commission, I made inquiry into the means which parishes possessed of enforcing public order, and in the far larger proportion of the agricultural parishes I was not able to learn that any such means existed. It appeared to be matter of doubt with several parish officers whom I examined, whether there was even any person in their parish who was qualified to act as a constable. In some parishes the beadle unites this office with his own, and in others some householder is annually sworn in for this purpose. In some few I was informed that a permanent officer of this kind was appointed; this, however, is usually the case in towns.

Rural Police.

At Leamington and Stratford-upon-Avon the townspeople had appointed a paid officer of police in each, and they are well satisfied, as I was informed, of its advantage; the population in

* With regard to the allotments of garden ground also made by Lord Stanhope, it is stated in a letter from a person residing in the town, that they are occupied by mechanics and journeymen, as well as labourers, who pay one shilling a year for the use (its value might be 12 s.); and that the only benefit afforded to them is, that without such spot of land they might be without vegetables, for it does not make the labourer more independent of the parish than before.

† An instance was mentioned to me by Mr. Illedge, in the parish of Berkswell, where the allotment system had been adopted, which though perhaps alarming to farmers, is certainly indicative of its effect upon the character of the labourer. He states, that during the harvest of this year, he had engaged some Irishmen to assist in getting in the crops; upon which every one of his own labourers struck work, and said, that if the Irish were suffered to come upon the land that they would not do a stroke of work again for him. Mr. Illedge said that he was obliged to submit, and sent away the Irish. These men had each allotments.

‡ One abuse to be guarded against is that on the part of land-owners, who may avail themselves of the charity of their neighbours to procure high rents for their land, which the labourer will be able to pay if his capital is given to him, and his land exempted from its ordinary charges.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

in each is between 3,000 and 4,000. At Birmingham there is a paid officer, with men under him, who has acted in that capacity for upwards of 20 years, and it is not doubted that his appointment has been attended with great service to the town, by contributing to the security of person and property, and preventing the commission of crime.

In every hundred there is an officer called the high constable, whose duties, however, appear to be rather connected with the finances than the security of the county, since, as I was informed, his business is confined to the collection of the county rate.

The efficiency of the yeomanry as a force for the purpose of general protection, appears to be somewhat doubtful; they are said to act neither with the judgment nor confidence in themselves of regular troops, while their conduct is usually regarded with more suspicion by the people. This may be accounted for in some measure from their being supposed to act more under the influence of political bias or local prejudice than the regular troops ever are suspected of doing. In each of the counties that I visited there had been riots during the years 1830 and 1831, and it appeared to be a very general opinion that the farmers, peculiarly distressed themselves at that time, had not used their best endeavours to suppress the disturbance, and in some cases they were said to have encouraged the rioters.

The persons composing the yeomanry are usually farmers and men of property, and when riots occur in the agricultural districts they may be called upon to act in the neighbourhood of their property, and must therefore be considered to incur more than ordinary risk in efficiently performing their duty to the public.

In one place in Gloucestershire I was informed that a body of farmers had associated together for the purpose of repelling the rioters, but before the riot had ceased they altered their intention. During the late riots the country appeared to be in a totally unprotected state, and under the influence of the alarm which this had occasioned, I met with many persons who were most desirous that some provision should be made for their protection in future.

Education.

There is another subject connected with the interests of the poor, which, though not specially referred to in the Instructions, can be hardly overlooked in considering the means of bettering their condition, namely, their education. In the ordinary acceptation of this word it has chiefly reference to intellectual cultivation, and in this sense, perhaps, it is not so immediately important to the welfare of the poor as what is contemplated by the Commission in the removal of a barrier, which is now opposed by the operation of the Poor Laws to the other great branch of general education, the cultivation of moral and social feeling. But though I am disposed to agree with the intelligent gentleman whose evidence I have before referred to (Mr. Chapple), in thinking "that all that can be done will be ineffectual and imperfect unless the poor are lifted in the scale of humanity by being made to feel the difference between dependent and independent existence, and until they become imbued with a love of moral worth and social order;"* yet as a means of calling into action a spirit of independence so essential to the harmless operation of any public system of relief, the importance of encouraging among the poorest class the exercise of the reasoning and reflective powers can hardly be doubted. It is in this view much to be wished that public charity could be made to include within its objects the *prevention* of misery and pauperism no less than the provision for them whenever they occur, and for this purpose that all funds raised or bequeathed for the relief of the poor should be rendered available for the arrangements requisite for a national system of instruction.†

The results of elementary instruction, with reference to pauperism even under the present system, will be seen by the following report from the parish of Edgbaston, where, as I have stated before, by means of the benevolent exertions of Dr. Johnstone, an adult school had been established. The report is sent to me by Mr. Frederic Hill, of Birmingham.

"All the information I obtain confirms me in the opinion that the institution is exceedingly valuable in many points of view, and among others as a *check to pauperism*. Dr. Johnstone's school has now been established about seventeen years, during which time there have been only two or three cases of members resorting to the parish for relief, and these cases occurred in the first few years after the school was founded; *for many years there has not been a single case of a member applying for parochial relief*, though the school consists of 40 men, that is, of more than half the labourers in the parish of Edgbaston. It appears that the school has not only acted as a preventive of pauperism, but in some instances to have worked the far more difficult problem of turning a confirmed pauper into an independent industrious labourer. One of the two men I have examined has been permanent overseer of the poor for nine years, and he related a case (the only one of which he was certain,) of a man, who before he was admitted into Dr. Johnstone's school, had been very expensive to the parish as a pauper, having been frequently in the poor-house, and at other times supplied with fuel, bedding, &c. This man has now become steady and industrious, and for several years has been quite independent of parish assistance; indeed I suppose he has become a *capitalist*, for I learn that he is keeping a shop. My respondent, the overseer of nine years standing, became qualified to take his office by attending the adult school. When he first went to the school he could neither read nor write. The men who attend the school are of all ages, from 18 to about 70. The school hours are from six till eight on the Sunday evening; but the men frequently work at home in the evenings of the week-days. I am told that, generally speaking, the men learn to read sufficiently well, for reading to become an amusement, in six months; writing is slower work; however by the end of the first year they are generally able to write their

† The very inadequate provision which exists at present for the education of the poor, may be seen in the Table appended to this Report (App. No. 3.) There appear to be only 20 clergymen and 12 schoolmasters in 66 parishes.

* Written statement.

their own names tolerably well. The whole management of the school is in the hands of the men themselves, a committee laying down the regulations, &c., and managing a sick fund. The sick fund is raised by subscriptions of a penny a week from each member. If a member falls ill, or sustains a loss, or is in any way distressed for want of money, relief is afforded; the precise amount being determined by the committee, on a consideration of the circumstances of the case. As yet the fund has proved more than sufficient; some time ago the men divided 40*l.* among them, at the recommendation of Dr. Johnstone, and more than 50*l.* is still in his hands, and yet there is no limit as to the age when persons are admitted. The doctor has attained his ultimate object, which was to call into play the social feelings of the men, and to cultivate a spirit of independence among them, at the same time fostering the most kindly feelings between the labouring classes and the wealthy classes. The men appear to be much attached to Dr. Johnstone, and to be very grateful to him, though the money-cost of what he does for them has for a long time been inconsiderable."

I have now faithfully detailed to the Commission the result of my inquiries in the districts allotted to me, and I will only state, in conclusion, that though I found in every place which I visited a deep sympathy with the interests and distresses of the poor, I met with no dissentient voice on the expediency of immediately effecting an extensive change in the administration of the Poor Laws.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Charles Pelham Villiers.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

APPENDIX

To REPORT from C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Appendix, No. 1.

THE following are extracts from the evidence of some very intelligent persons, with whom I either conversed myself, or who have since sent their written statements in favour of some general change of the present system.

Mr. Power, a manufacturer, states, that after 36 years' experience he has been led to conclude that the actual taxation for the poor ought to be general,—1st, for England and Wales; 2d, Scotland; 3d, Ireland.

Sir Theophilus Biddulph, of Birbury, the oldest magistrate in Warwickshire, states, in answer to the query respecting the union of parishes, that if the parochial affairs of country parishes were managed by others than themselves, it would be to their advantage.

The Rev. Frederick Perkins, a magistrate for the county of Warwick, in answer to Query 30, "Can you suggest any and what alteration in the Settlement Laws?" says, None, except the doing away with all settlements, and making every description of property contribute to the relief of the poor in general throughout the kingdom.

Mr. Power, overseer of Atherstone, after recommending a county or an enlarged assessment, and after admitting that there was some ground for supposing that it would destroy that vigilance which a local payment of the poor has a tendency to induce, observes, "that whatever might be the evils which would attend the change, they are only imaginative, as such a law is not in operation." "But," says he, "let us look at the present Law of Settlement, as arising out of the local management of the poor, and you may trace such a train of complicated evils from it as never before was found in the results of any one law operating upon the poor of any nation under the sun."

The Rev. J. Gwyther, and a committee of Rate-payers in the parish of Chilverscoton, having met for the purpose of returning answers to the Commissioners' Queries, after illustrating and enlarging upon the very unequal manner in which the burden of the poor was now borne, say, "To make these expenses fall lightly and equally upon all parties, it would be well to have a consolidated Poor Rate, borne by the nation at large, and payable into one general fund, which should be collected by an individual having nothing to do with the management of the poor. This would prevent any heavy expenses upon parishes, continually occurring, by removal of paupers and appeals against them." They add, "The welfare of the community must consist in the welfare of its several portions, and the more we can be united together, and caused to feel an interest in each other's welfare, and induced to bear each other's burdens, the more this object will be effected."

Mr. Eld, a gentleman residing at Coventry, of many years' experience in the management of the poor, in his written statement addressed to me says, "It appears to me, that unless the charges for the poor are thrown over more extended districts, or into one general fund, that any alteration in them will tend materially to injure the populous and manufacturing districts by still further adding to their burdens."

Mr. Allen, a tradesman of Droitwich, who stated to me, that he considered that the provision for the poor was a national institution that ought to be supported by a national fund, complains, in his written replies, that there are many retired tradesmen and others who enjoy great wealth, but who pay little or nothing to the support of the poor, and that persons who are thus living at their ease should have their income taxed, and not be suffered to escape from a direct tax like that for the Poor.

Mr. Williams, solicitor and town-clerk of Tewksbury, shows, in an able paper that he has sent to me upon the operation of the Poor Law, the great evils and hardships of the present law of settlement, and proposes that the poor should be supported from out of some national fund, to which property in general should be made to contribute; "which," says he, "would at least do away with the anomalies, expense, disgust and confusion of our Settlement system."

Mr. G. Whieldon, a magistrate acting for two counties, in a letter which he has addressed to the "Coventry Mercury" upon this inquiry, (and which he has forwarded to me,) says, "No doubt the subject is surrounded by great difficulties—but something *must* be done beyond the mere simplifying the Law of Settlement. You have very properly suggested (as I conceive) the expediency of the Government taking the whole matter into their own hands, which would enable them to find work for the able and unemployed poor in various public works of the country. Another course will be for the legislature to equalize the burthen, by declaring both real and personal property liable to the tax, and by raising that tax either by a national or county rate; and I believe that less than 1s. in the pound levied on all tangible property would raise the required fund."

I may here add the opinion of Mr. Tomes, M. P. of the town of Warwick; of Mr. Chapman, of Stoneleigh; Mr. Handley, of Barford; Mr. Whateley, of Wellsbourne, (names well known in the county of Warwick); Mr. Lakin, in Worcestershire; each in favour of a national system of maintaining the poor. See also petition from the parish of Sowe, App. No. 4.

Appendix, No. 2.

A STATEMENT of the PRICES of LABOUR, WHEAT and BARLEY, PROVISIONS and NECESSARIES,
from the Year 1789 to 1832.

WARWICKSHIRE.

PRICES OF LABOUR, WHEAT AND BARLEY.				PRICES OF PROVISIONS AND NECESSARIES.					
Date.	Day Work, per Day.	Wheat thrashed, per Bag of 3 Bushels, 9 Gallons to the Bushel.	Barley thrashed, by the Quarter, 8 Bush ^l 9 Gall ⁿ measure.	Price of Beef, per lb.	Price of Mutton, per lb.	Price of Wheat, per Winchester Bushel.	Price of Labourers' Strong Shoes a Pair.	Price of Labourers' Coats or Jackets.	Price of Labourers' Smock or Round Frocks.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1789	1 -	1 -	1 3	- 4	- 4				
1790	1 -	1 -	1 3	- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 4				
1791	1 -	1 -	1 3	- 4	- 4				
1792	1 -	- 11	1 2	- 4	- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 -	6s. a piece	4 8
1793	1 -	1 -	1 4	- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 1 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1794	1 -	1 -	1 2	- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 4	6 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1795	1 2	1 -	1 4	- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	8 10 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1796	1 2	1 -	1 6	- 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 6			
1797	1 2	1 -	1 6	- 6	- 6	6 6			
1798	1 2	1 6	1 8	- 5	- 5	6 3			
1799	1 2	1 -	1 6	- 5	- 5	8 7 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1800	1 2	1 6	1 10	- 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 6	13 1 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1801	1 2	1 6	2 -	- 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 9	15 -			
1802	1 2	1 3	2 2	- 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	8 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1803	1 4	1 3	1 10	- 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 8	7 -			
1804	1 4	1 3	1 10	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1805	1 4	1 6	1 10	- 6	- 6	10 10 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1806	1 4	1 6	1 10	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 7	9 7 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1807	1 4	1 4	2 -	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 1 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1808	1 4	1 4	2 -	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 10 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1809	1 4	2 -	2 3	- 7	- 8	11 9			
1810	1 6	1 10	2 3	- 7	- 8	13 1 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1811	2 -	1 8	2 6	- 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 8	11 7 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1812	2 -	2 4	3 -	- 7	- 8	15 7 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1813	2 -	2 -	2 9	- 8	- 9	13 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1814	2 -	2 -	2 6	- 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 9	9 3			
1815	2 -	1 4	2 3	- 7	- 8	8 -			
		8 gal ⁿ measure.	Qr. 8 bus ^l 8 gal ⁿ						
1816*	1 6	1 2	1 9	- 6	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1817	2 -	1 6	2 4	- 6	- 6	11 9			
1818	1 6	1 2	2 -	- 7	- 8	10 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1819	1 6	1 2	2 -	- 7	- 8	9 -			
1820	1 6	2 -	2 6	- 8	- 8	8 1 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1821	1 6	1 2	2 -	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 7	6 9			
1822	1 6	1 5	1 6	- 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 4	5 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1823	1 -	- 10	1 4	- 5	- 5	6 4 $\frac{1}{2}$			
1824	1 4	1 1	1 6	- 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 6	7 9			
1825	1 6	1 4	2 -	- 7	- 7	9 1			
1826	2 -	1 5	2 4	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 7	7 9			
1827	1 8	1 2	2 6	- 7	- 8	6 8			
1828	1 6	2 -	2 -	- 7	- 7	7 4			
1829	1 8	1 6	2 3	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 7	8 6			
1830	1 8	-	1 10	- 6	- 6	8 6			
1831	1 8	-	2 6	- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	- 7	8 6			
1832	1 8	-	2 6	- 6	- 7	7 4	11s. per pair	11 -	6 6

* From this date the labourer thrashed by the Winchester measure, 8 gallons to the bushel.

Note.—The prices of other labour, such as hedging, ditching, mowing, &c. appear to vary about the same degree as the day work in each year. The labourers have always had small beer. The above prices do not include the harvest month. Most of the labourers would earn from 40s. to 60s. in the harvest, exclusive of victuals for a month.

The prices of the meat are taken from the books of John Hopkins, butcher, Kenilworth, and may be considered rather a high average than otherwise, Hopkins always having been considered to kill the best kind of meat.

The prices of the grain from the year 1792 to 1824 are taken from a printed particular I have in my possession (the yearly average of England and Wales, and may be taken as rather a lower price than the average of the grain sold in this quarter. The prices from 1824 to 1832 are from the books of a miller near this place, and may be taken as a fair average of this neighbourhood.

The prices of shoes, &c. are taken from a statement of W. Hubbard (shepherd), who has lived with my late father and self for 50 years.

Barford.

W. Handley.

Appendix, No. 3.

STATISTICAL TABLE of the PARISHES, &c. attending the

HUNDRED.	NAMES of PARISH or HAMLET.	Computed Rateable Acres.	RENTAL.		POPULATION.			
			1815.	1832.	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
UPPER PERSHORE HUNDRED.	Pershore, Saint Andrew -	600	4,421	3,500	712	801	863	964
	Pershore, Holy Cross -	3,587	2,438	1,900	1,198	1,378	1,465	1,572
	Town TOTAL - - -	-	6,859	5,400	1,910	2,179	2,328	2,536
	Broadway - - -	4,000	8,124	5,500	1,117	1,331	1,382	1,517
	Abberton - - -	900	1,407	1,100	86	88	82	90
	Besford - - -	1,290	1,991	1,550	126	127	154	146
	Birlington - - -	1,161	2,791	2,250	353	373	327	360
	Comberton Magna - -	1,000	1,238	1,000	218	220	206	229
	Comberton Parva - -	750	1,332	1,050	168	158	172	219
	Domreston - - -	700	670	450	85	87	113	157
MIDDLE OSWALDSLOW HUNDRED.	Eckington - - -	1,725	4,010	3,000	550	610	668	700
	Flyford Flavel - - -	750	737	550	117	124	159	154
	Grafton Flyford - - -	1,500	2,343	1,350	184	221	241	242
	Nauntun Beauchamp -	950	1,092	800	115	123	149	149
	North Piddle - - -	800	974	850	103	125	133	119
	Walcot cum Membris -	Holy Cross	5,987	5,000	239	282	330	375
	Wadborough - - -				159	163	132	198
	Bricklehampton - - -	800	1,477	1,300	102	117	156	156
	Defford - - -	1,500	1,878	1,550	284	334	347	383
	Pensham - - -	650	1,589	1,200	81	102	95	118
UPPER BLACKENHURST HUNDRED.	Pinvin - - -	600	1,145	850	136	159	199	179
	Wick - - -	1,700	3,099	2,200	262	302	303	280
	Pirton - - -	1,531	2,269	1,500	191	207	214	214
	Peopleton - - -	1,150	1,778	1,400	214	264	264	276
	Strensham - - -	2,000	2,377	2,000	286	295	312	328
	Bishampton - - -	1,800	2,463	1,900	308	290	374	393
	Bredon - - -	1,100	5,202	3,500	749	886	928	960
	Kensham - - -	300						
	Westmancote - - -	705						
	Hardwick and Mytton -	800	2,101	1,500				
MIDDLE OSWALDSLOW HUNDRED.	Norton juxta Bredon -	1,077	1,577	1,350	220	214	199	199
	Crophthorne - - -	1,479	2,496	1,700	240	259	304	285
	Charlton - - -	1,500	3,005	1,900	248	280	277	276
	Netherton - - -	700	1,434	800	82	80	106	129
	Elmley Castle - - -	1,800	2,989	1,700	296	300	316	333
	Hadbury - - -	1,200	3,207	2,200	424	412	451	417
	Hill and Moore - - -	1,200	1,380	900	235	260	295	304
	Hoblentch - - -	700	608	500	89	90	102	116
	Throckmorton - - -	1,450	1,384	950	150	164	153	159
	Wyre Piddle - - -	200	661	400	144	140	178	175
UPPER BLACKENHURST HUNDRED.	Harvington - - -	1,200	2,348	1,800	262	260	353	318
	Overbury - - -	1,150	1,775	1,350	425	306	395	447
	Alstone - - -	558	892	700	83	83	79	78
	Conderton - - -	700	940	700		109	89	112
	Teddington - - -	754	1,226	900	111	115	146	129
	Washbourne Parva - -	330	800	600	59	68	55	51
	Rouselench - - -	1,200	1,575	1,100	231	235	258	251
	Sedgeberrow - - -	990	1,595	1,150	184	195	250	224
	Badsey - - -	1,175	1,999	1,600	284	262	334	359
	Aldington - - -	620	1,331	1,000	83	80	87	104
UPPER BLACKENHURST HUNDRED.	Bretfertton - - -	1,600	2,466	1,850	413	444	451	423
	Church Honeybourne -	1,308	1,287	1,000	62	93	136	108
	Littleton, North and Middle	1,480	2,789	1,750	304	349	342	360
	Littleton, South - - -	800	1,633	1,200	116	191	204	110
	Offenham - - -	1,100	2,614	2,100	264	298	342	360
	Wickhamford - - -	1,200	1,711	1,250	125	137	130	136

Appendix, No. 3.

PETTY SESSIONS of the PERSHORE DIVISION of the County of Worcester.

POOR'S RATES: Average of the last Three Years.	HIGHWAY RATES, 1831-32.	VESTRY.		Work-house or Poor-house.	Assistant Overseer.	Schoolmaster in Parish.	RESIDENT.		
		Select.	Common.				Magistrates	Gentry.	Clergy.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.								
686 - 802	16 3 -	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	1
870 18 -	29 8 3½	1	—	1	1	1	—	—	1
972 9 2	86 4 6	—	1	—	—	1	2	—	1
126 13 9	28 15 -	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
108 12 -	45 4 8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
269 13 8	24 1 4½	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
151 13 -	31 5 5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
103 17 4	27 9 8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
100 - 81	12 7 5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
369 - 80	57 18 4	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
90 6 -	19 17 2½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
113 8 -	96 12 6	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
106 3 -	45 11 7½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
110 17 9	93 3 7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
See Holy Cross Persnore.	101 9 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
175 8 -	63 11 -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
278 3 -	18 9 5	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
194 9 -	11 9 8	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
86 12 -	2 10 9	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
262 -	5 15 8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
224 12 1	20 13 7½	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	—
124 11 -	33 10 11	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
318 14 -	62 5 1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
228 15 7	64 11 7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
309 8 -	49 14 6	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	1
120 4 -	61 8 11¼	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	1
155 14 -	4 5 2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
279 - -	45 10 10¼	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
154 7 -	4 13 5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
200 7 -	19 8 5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
208 7 9	7 5 6½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
94 11 -	22 6 7	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
242 2 6	8 16 11	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
278 5 -	57 1 7	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
166 9 -	34 13 -	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
89 9 -	27 3 7½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
127 15 -	29 2 11	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
93 10 1	22 9 10	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
240 - -	3 18 6½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
162 2 -	51 13 5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
55 4 -	15 17 8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
58 13 -	16 12 2½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
166 2 -	9 1 4	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
35 3 -	11 - 10	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
102 8 -	9 14 6	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
182 13 -	33 5 9½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
55 8 8	24 9 5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
195 11 -	12 8 9	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
120 6 -	22 4 7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
262 18 2	97 14 9½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
182 7 -	98 13 7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
146 6 -	93 19 7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
53 15 11	36 5 1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	24 17 8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	26 10 10½	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—

Appendix, No. 3.—STATISTICAL TABLE of the Parishes, &c. attending the

UNDRED.	NAMES of PARISH or HAMLET.	Computed Rateable Acres.	RENTAL.		POPULATION.			
			1815.	1832.	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
LOWER BLACKENHURST HUNDRE D.	Abbotts Morton - - -	- - -	1,563	1,000	191	231	236	233
	Hampton Magna and Parva	1,450	2,966	2,000	276	333	324	290
	Norton and Lenchwick - -	2,500	3,896	2,750	306	339	386	397
	Atch Lench - - -	630	515	450	70	55	63	82
	Sheriffs Lench - - -	1,100	1,173	850	55	59	76	88
UPPER HALF SHIRE HUNDRED.	Church Lench - - -	600	664	550	150	213	203	229
	Kington - - -	1,000	978	700	110	134	148	153
UPPER OSWALDSLOW HUNDRED.	Cleeve Prior - - -	1,400	1,909	1,450	287	322	343	368
			109,356	80,050	11,795	12,767	13,871	14,228

36 $\frac{1}{2}$ p' cent.
Decrease.

N.B.—Decrease in the whole
County of Worcester,
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ p' cent.*

8 $\frac{1}{4}$ p' cent. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ p' cent. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ p' cent.
Increase,
in each Period of Ten Years.

20 $\frac{1}{2}$ p' cent.
Increase in the last 30 Years.

N.B.—In the same Period, the whole
County of Worcester has in-
creased - - - 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ p' cent.
And the whole of England, 57 p' cent.

* The price of land has not fallen of late years in this country, and I did not hear that any land had gone out of cultivation; the fall of rental, therefore, does not prove that agricultural capital has diminished. The apparently slight increase of the population in this district during the last 10 years is another indication that the condition of the labourer ought not to be deteriorated. The ratio of increase in these parishes being smaller is chiefly owing to the absorption of the people by the manufacturing districts, where capital has in fact greatly increased.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Appendix, No. 4.

To the COMMISSIONERS appointed by HIS MAJESTY to inquire into the practical Operation of the
Laws for the Relief of the Poor.

The Memorial of the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of *Sowe*, in
the county of *Warwick*, and county of the city of *Coventry*.

Sheweth,

THAT your Memorialists are convinced, by daily experience, that the laws for the relief of the poor as at present administered, operate as a boon and encouragement to the imprudent, idle and profligate, and are of little benefit to the aged, infirm and impotent, owing, in the first place, to the common idea entertained by the poor, that they have a right to parochial relief, under almost any circumstances; and, secondly, to the facility with which relief is obtained. In confirmation of this opinion, your Memorialists beg leave to state, that young persons, when the ribbon trade is good, are in the habit of receiving considerable wages, which they spend very improvidently, and soon after they marry, which many do very early in life, they have recourse to the parish for support. Of the persons who apply weekly to the parish for relief, very few are industrious respectable characters, knowing that the churchwardens and overseers are bound by the existing law to set them to work or afford them relief, and the scale of maintenance allowed by the magistrates is 2 s. for each parent, 1 s. 6 d. for each child, 1 s. for house-rent, and 1 s. for firing. The poor are become indifferent whether they change masters or not, and frequently refuse or neglect to endeavour to obtain employment. All shame of becoming chargeable to a parish has disappeared, and should the demand of relief (for such is now the nature of their application) be refused by the overseer or the select vestry, they immediately repair to the magistrates for relief, who, ignorant, it is to be hoped, of the real character and circumstances of the applicants, forthwith make an order of relief upon the churchwardens and overseers of the poor, whereby the parishioners are aggrieved, idleness and improvidence are encouraged, and character set at nought. Your Memorialists have many such orders in their possession, one of which amounted to 25 s. per week, for a man, his wife and four children, three of them above ten years of age. The parishioners felt it to be their duty to prosecute the pauper, who obtained the said order by means of perjury, of which crime he was convicted; an account of the trial is sent herewith. To obviate these abuses, your Memorialists most respectfully suggest, that it would be advisable to make the decision of

Petty Sessions of the Pershore Division of the County of Worcester—continued.

POOR'S RATES: Average of the last Three Years.			HIGHWAY RATES, 1831-32.			VESTRY.		Workhouse or Poor-house.	Assistant Overseer.	Schoolmaster in Parish.	RESIDENT.		
						Select.	Common.				Magistrates	Gentry.	Clergy.
£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.								
139	14	—	7	4	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
173	10	—	3	11	4	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	—
349	—	—	19	14	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
89	5	3	15	1	8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
141	5	6	8	1	6	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
94	—	—	15	8	8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
66	7	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
203	—	—	32	18	8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
8,896	18	7											

Avonbank, 30 November 1832.

Tho. Marriott, M.-Gen.

Major-General Marriott, in noticing this Table in his evidence, says, “ Among these 66 parishes there may be 12 or 13 where gentlemen and clergymen reside and take part in parish affairs ; in most of the rest, I fear I might draw too exact a picture by saying their affairs are managed by some few principal farmers and landowners, generally at open variance and formed into two inveterate parties. The poorer parishioners are obliged to take one side or the other, and are favoured or oppressed as their party prevails. Such are the persons for whom it is necessary to legislate, as well as for inhabitants of large towns, in making or altering laws for the poor, and this cannot be too strongly impressed upon the minds of His Majesty’s Commissioners.”

of the select vestry in all matters of relief final, or to enact, that any pauper who should be convicted of obtaining from the select vestry, or the magistrates, relief by means of false statements, should be subject to certain and severe punishment; that magistrates should be compelled to inquire into the general character and average earnings of a pauper, before they make an order of relief; that an appeal should lie against a magistrate’s order, should the parish upon which it is made feel aggrieved, (the said parish first obeying such order,) and that the amount contained in any such order, together with the expense of appeal, should be refunded to the appellant parish out of the county rates, in the event of the said order being set aside. Your Memorialists are satisfied that such law would tend in a great measure to restore the laws for the relief of the poor to their original salutary intent. Your Memorialists beg leave moreover to direct your attention to the vast expense of litigating cases of settlement, and to the great and unequal pressure of the Poor Laws upon the landed interest in the manufacturing districts. The parish of Sowe, for instance, (and there are many less favoured,) contains a population of 1,500 persons; the majority of them are engaged in the weaving of ribbons, and their masters reside principally in Coventry, from whom, when the ribbon manufacture is in a flourishing condition, they receive employment, and by whom, the moment the trade declines, they are sent adrift to be maintained by their respective parishes, to the rates of which their masters contribute little or nothing. To remedy this evil, your Memorialists suggest that the settlement laws be repealed; and they venture to propose that the maintenance of the poor should become a national charge, and every description of property be taxed for their relief.

Appendix (A.)
Reports.
C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Sowe, near Coventry.

W. W. Brown, } Churchwardens.
Thos. Atkins, }
Jno Harris, } Overseers of the Poor.
Wm Wall, }
John Jackson, }

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Appendix, No. 5.

EXTRACT from a LETTER written by ———, a dissenting minister, who left *Holsworthy* in *Devonshire*, in the year 1831, and settled in *St. Thomas*, district of *London*, *Upper Canada*.

Character.	" THIS is generally considered the best part of North America by all travellers who are acquainted with these regions.
Law. Taxes.	" We have English laws here, but some of its burthen thrown off. We do not pay but a little more than one-fifth of the taxes they pay in the United States.
Condition, climate, and situation.	" Here paupers and poverty are unknown. We never see a beggar, or a person complaining of hard times. The climate of this country is healthy ; where we are lies between 42 & 43 degrees north latitude, and due west from the middle part of the States of New York.
Climate.	" The climate is something hotter in summer, but not a great deal, than England, and something colder in winter.
Production :	" Its production :—The land here grows fine wheat, rye, barley, Indian oats, peas, buck wheat, potatoes, turnips, and all kinds of garden herbage, as in England. Punkins grow in fields by thousands, without manure. People generally plant them along the Indian corn, which grows to an immense size. They are planted and raised together in this way. People make use of a great many for cattle. Cucumbers can be grown also in the natural earth to any quantity. People here grow bushels of them in this way. In the season the people will give you as many as you will carry of them. Water maloons and musk maloons grow in great quantities. Fruits :—Apples grow in great quantities ; they have been selling here at a quarter dollar per bushel. This being a new country, the orchards are very young. But few of the inhabitants have been settled for more than from 15 to 20 years. Few miles further down the province they sell for about 4 <i>d.</i> English per bushel. Peaches, same places. Apple trees are easily raised. You have only to put the seed in the earth, and a tree grows up, bearing fruit of precisely the same kind and quality of the apple from them they were taken, without grafting, and they grow as much in one year as in two or three in England. Plums, &c. A great many wild fruits grow in the woods, such as plums. Of grapes we can gather bushels. Mandrakes, commonly called May apples. These grow on a plant about a foot in height. The fruit is about the size of a small apple, and the shape of a pumpkin, and are counted very delicious by some. Raspberries as plenty as blackberries in England, and blackberries plenty. Blackhooze, commonly called nunnyberries, black and red cherries, and some places chesnuts. Walnuts we can gather waggon loads. Butter nuts and Hukong nuts. Basle, the spice of the walnut kind in great abundance. Hazel nuts in some places, but in this mediate neighbourhood gooseberries and black currants.
Wheat. Turnips. Punkins. Indian Corn. Apples. Peaches. Plums. Grapes. Mandrakes. Raspberries. Cherries. Walnuts. Hazel Nuts. Gooseberries and Currants.	
Price of provisions.	" Mutton, beef and pork sell at from 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ <i>d.</i> to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>d.</i> per lb. of your money. We can often buy venison at 1 <i>d.</i> per lb. Butter sells now at 1 <i>s.</i> , York, 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ <i>d.</i> English in the summer. Nine cents or cent is equal to half a penny with you.
Further description of St. Thomas.	" St. Thomas is an insignificant village as to its extent, I suppose not larger than Kilkhampston, but rapidly growing ; I suppose it has nearly doubled the last year ; but it is a great place of business. There is the market for produce, where the merchants will buy any quantity of wheat, pork, black salts, and there are four large stons or shops, where you can get almost any thing you want at a reasonable price for this country. It stands only two miles from the harbour where shipping comes, and from which vessels can go down Lake Erie to the States, or direct to England. Here the produce is shipped off, and manufactories brought. A grist-mill and saw-mill, tucking-mills and cording-machines are about half a mile from St. Thomas. There is an English church, and I preach in the Academy. Merchandize, and most articles of hardware can be bought nearly as cheap as you can buy it at Mr. Thorne's, or Mr. Yeo's at Holsworthy. Linen not a great deal dearer than in England. Clothes and woollen drapery is about one-fourth dearer. Iron, such as crockery, is cast about fifty miles from here, and another furnace is going to start about thirty. Iron rises plentifully here ; it is found about eighteen inches or two feet under the surface of the earth, and is found in layers of about two feet thick, like sand. If this layer is taken away, in about fourteen years it is fully replaced by a layer of equal thickness. It is taken to the foundries and cast into various articles, or manufactured to iron to be worked by. Blacksmiths and smiths use charcoal here instead of pit-coal to heat their irons with. Manufactures :—Most people here manufacture their own common clothing. They grow their flax, which they manufacture into linen of various kinds, and their wool they get carded at the carding-machines. They dye it with bark of trees, which can be got plentifully in the woods, of various colours. This is made into cloths for men's coats, trowsers, waistcoats, &c. and gowns for women. Most families are able to spin wool or flax, and a great many of them are able to weave. They also make their own candles and soap. No duty is paid for anything. Soap is made from the lye of wood-ashes and grease, and is something like black soap in thickness ; hard soap sells nearly as in England ; it is about a York shilling per lb. Sugar is made in great quantities from the sugar mabb. Cider is made in large quantities in some parts of this province, and is sold at from 1 dollar to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ dollar per barrel of 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ gallons. Honey is raised in large quantities ; sells at about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>d.</i> per lb. Whiskey is distilled plentifully ; sells about 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> York, about 1 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> per gallon ; in smaller quantities, 1 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i> per gallon. Beer is brewed, but not so good as English beer ; reboiled at a York 1 <i>s.</i> per quart. Leather is manufactured ; sells about the price of English, or rather a little cheaper, not nigh so good. Hats are manufactured, but are sold very high ; a hat that sells in England for 6 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> or 7 <i>s.</i> is sold here for 4 dollars ; and one in England for 18 <i>s.</i> , here about 8 dollars ; there is a greater difference in this article than any that I am acquainted with. Cattle :—Horses, cows and calves, from 12 to 17 or 18 dollars each. I think, according to my judgment, they are worth about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per cwt. Horses from 70 to 100 dollars and upwards. Horses here are not generally so large as
Market.	
Situation.	
Church.	
Merchandize.	
Clothes and Drapery.	
Iron.	
Manufactures.	
Soap.	
Sugar.	
Cider.	
Honey.	
Whiskey.	
Beer.	
Leather.	
Hats.	
Cattle.	
Horses.	

25

as in England, but much more handsome. We never see a poor looking horse in labour, which is drawing in waggons or sledges. They generally run as fast as hackney coach horses with you. All heavy work is done with oxen, which are a great deal better for work than English oxen. Sheep are smaller, and when fat worth from two to three dollars each. Hogs are raised in great numbers, which costs very little either in trouble or expense. They run in the woods. Farmers kill sometimes 14 or 15 in a day in the winter, which they sell to the merchants, and are selling now $3\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per cwt., under 2 cwt. about 4 dollars. Fat geese, 4 s. York; fowls, 1 s. York; a pair of good oxen from 50 to 60 dollars. Groceries are much cheaper, except salt, which is much dearer. Tea is about half the price. Spices very cheap, not more than one-half as dear. Tobacco, 2 s. per lb. York. Price of land; —Land is sold for $2\frac{1}{2}$ dollars and upwards.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Oxen.
Hogs.
Poultry.

People.

"The inhabitants are generally very civil and honest; very hospitable to strangers. Thieving is never heard of, so that people scarcely ever lock or bar their doors, and are not afraid to leave them so by day or night.

Wages.

Labourers.

Malting.

Newspaper.

Money.

Exchange.

Exports.

Advice.

Rate of living.

Clearing land.

Prospects of Emigrants.

"Wages and price of labour;—Carpenters get 12 s. York, per day, and boarded, and 14 s. and board themselves; masons the same; tailors, for making a coat and waistcoat, six and a half dollars; shoemakers making men's shoes, six shillings, (the greatest part of the people make their own shoes); labourers in the summer get six shillings a day, in harvest a dollar and board; in winter there is but little employ, except in chopping wood or splitting rails, work at which old country people are not acquainted with, and consequently can earn but little for some time after their arrival; malting is not a good business, because barley is not easily obtained, as but little is grown—all the barley, or what is called so here, is what we call bare in England, but there is but little doubt but English barley would answer well here; malting, brewing and distilling are carried on at St. Thomas. Every village of note here has a printing office, and publishes a weekly newspaper, there is one published at St. Thomas, one at London, &c. Here is not a great deal of money in circulation, but there is but little call for it, as the people have no rent to pay, no tithe, poor rate, no highway rates nor church rates, and the taxes altogether is little more than a dollar per year for 100 acres of land; however, the people can get any article they want at the stores, and pay them in produce, or they can get money for wheat, pork, &c. to any amount. Thousands of barrels of wheat and pork are exported from here every year, which are shipped at Port Stanley. I suppose where there was one dollar in circulation three years ago there is a dozen now, and wheat sells much higher, while every article of mercantile goods sells for less than half the price. Edge tools, or at least a great many, are manufactured in this province and in the States, and are much better quality than those brought from England, carpenters' tools in particular; English axes are not worth a cent here for any use, the axes used here are quite another shape and tenfold better tempered, and are made of cast steel. Blacksmiths have about 10 s. for shoeing a horse on all four feet and the employer finds iron; most persons find their own iron for smithing and leather for boots and shoes, so that the workman is under no disadvantage of laying out money for these articles. I find my paper nearly done; I must break from any further description, and conclude by giving a few words of advice: I told you in my last letter I would deceive no one, nor will I; I will have every one to judge for himself; if any have determined to emigrate to America they cannot come to a better place than this, if they have a little money. Land can be obtained of the best quality America will afford, and cheaper than any where, with equal conveniences; there is a great deal of poor land in the States can be bought, and some good that lies back, when they can make but little return of their produce. Land that lies convenient is held dear.

"Two people, with industry, can do more with 100 l. here than with 1,000 l. in England. People here do not work nor live near as hard as there, and it is easier to settle a family of 10 children here than one in England. People here are clothed decent, and live well; any one who has a little money may soon become what is termed here independent, that is, raise every thing he wants on his own land, and live more at his ease, though he has some hard labour to do on wild land first, which will prove painful to the feelings of an idle person when he goes into the forest and considers all must be cleared before he can raise any thing from the land. However, if the land is once cleared, he has only to sow the seed and fence his land and gather his crop. It is easier to cultivate six acres here than one in England, and when farmers have it, it is their own; they are not in debt, they have nothing to pay, all he has he can call his own; if he has a family, he can settle them in land. Let none who come here think they shall find America interspersed with golden mountains, as some people at home think; but they must learn using the axe, and find a pleasure in cultivating the land, and in a few years, with industry, they will find themselves comfortably situated, and can live at their ease, which they would never be able to do in England."

Appendix, No. 6.

THE following LETTER was received in reply to Inquiries made on the subject of Emigration.

North Devon, Bideford, 21st December 1832.

"EMIGRATION" from Bideford to the British Colonies in North America, commenced in 1829, when about 54 families embarked; and being principally agriculturists, and poor but industrious, I have seen them all improve their condition, and perfectly contented in the cultivation of forest and wilderness lands, which by hard work and hard living they have made their own, and sufficiently productive for their maintenance; and I know not an instance of disappointment or return. In 1830, about 70 families followed their example, and I have heard of the return of three individuals, who, addicted to the great 'bane of the country,' *inebriety*, were negligent of their interest, and left. In 1831, about 300 left this port, and I should think the extent of numbers returned does not exceed 10; and in the current year I have sent out 400, and other vessels have conveyed perhaps 200, and the return may possibly amount to 20, but I am not aware of one-half that number.

P. L. (A.)—II.

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Experience,

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

C. P. Villiers, Esq.

Experience, acquired by a ten years' residence in British America, has convinced me that the *industrious* poor of this country can never have just cause to regret their exchange from this country to many of the British provinces, where by the sweat of their brow they cannot fail to procure a maintenance, and secure an ultimate provision for their family, by being able to increase and allot their improved farms amongst their children; but it is equally clear and absurd, the impression that fortunes are to be realized, or a maintenance obtained without labour and persevering industry.

In America, as in this country, strangers (and particularly the simple and inexperienced) are exposed to the allurements and artifices of the numerous proffers of friendship and advice which emanate from those who crowd on board vessels on arrival, and by enticing people to their houses, they either draw them into the habit of drunkenness, or ultimately plunder them of the little they possess; that it is much to be desired, in assistance granted them either by parishes or individuals in England, that, if *possible*, both themselves and their funds should be in some degree under the control of persons of respectability and authority on their arrival.

Tho^s B. Chanter.

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No. 24.

REPORT from *Henry Pilkington, Esq.*

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

LEICESTERSHIRE.

MY LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

FOLLOWING as nearly as possible the instructions of the Central Board, I have examined into the state of the poor, and the administration of the Poor Laws in the county of Leicester. As I considered one object of my journey to be the eliciting opinions which had been formed by different classes of men upon the several subjects of my investigation, and the ascertaining the facts upon which those opinions had been formed, it appeared to me that it would be a better and a fairer method to give in detail the conversations themselves which I held with the different parties, than what I considered to be the substance of those conversations, that so the conclusions which they had arrived at, and which I might, myself, by possibility, be brought to adopt, might be much better judged of by others, than they could be were I to give what I consider the substance, but which might to others appear to be erroneous deductions. It may perhaps be thought that that part of our instructions which directs our calling upon the magistrates, attending petty sessions, &c., has not met with an equal degree of attention with many other parts of those instructions. I found, or fancied I found, the Commission not in good estimation with the magistrates. My first essay met with anything but a civil reception. On requesting a friend to state to some gentlemen in the commission of the peace, who were sitting in petty sessions in a large town, that I was sent by Government to inquire into the administration of the Poor Laws, and that I requested to know whether the magistrates were desirous of conferring with me; the answer brought to me, coupled with an observation upon the appointment not of the most respectful nature, considering from whence it emanated, was, "No, no; tell him we have nothing to say to him." The superior clergy are very generally magistrates through the county of Leicester; and where they are not, I do not find that their attendance at vestry meetings, except for purposes more particularly connected with the church, is very frequent; nor do I wonder at it; for, as far as my observation has extended, the feeling with which their presence is regarded at all vestry meetings, where the rate-payers are farmers, is not of that friendly sort which would induce a very frequent attendance, particularly where the farmers are tithe-payers also; and, I believe, that this observation will hold good generally throughout the kingdom. It must, I think, be evident, that if only one half of this Report be correct, it contains matter for the most serious reflection of all whose incomes are derived from landed property, of all who are in any way connected with the poor, or the administration of the Poor Laws.

Effect upon the Morals of the Lower Classes of the present Administration of the Poor Laws.

The following conclusions will appear from the evidence adduced: that in most of the parishes throughout Leicestershire, the poor's-rate is very high; that in every town and village which I have examined, it is, without a single exception, on the increase; that in many places it is equal to 10s. in the pound, in some to 12s., 14s. and 20s., and even the land itself to have become in some cases insufficient for the demands of the pauper; that the original intention of the law has been entirely perverted, what was established as a refuge for the aged, infirm and impotent, having become a means of subsistence to the young, the strong and the able-bodied; that parochial assistance is calculated upon by the poor as regularly as the wages derived from skill, labour or other sources of emolument; that it has taken away from the poor man all incentive to work, dependence upon others being now almost universally substituted among the labouring poor for dependence upon their own exertions; that relief is no longer considered by them a benevolence, but a right to which they are as much entitled as the landlord is to his estate; that the consequences are a continual breaking down of the peasantry, invasion of the rights of private property in the most awful form, improvident marriages, desertion of the parental and filial duties, drunken habits, deceit, falsehood, imposture, a diminution of diligence and prudence, of respect to their superiors, and a substitution of carelessness, reckless improvidence and insolence; that among the women shamelessness is substituted for natural modesty, incontinence is no longer considered a disgrace, but often looked to as a means of profit; and I may fairly add, that under the present system it may soon become matter of speculation, if it be not so already,

P. L. (A.)—II.

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State of Poor's-rate.

Has been diverted from its original intent and meaning.

Its effects.

Various effects of Poor's-rate on men.

Effect of system on women.

Reports.

A discouragement
to virtuous habits.

already, whether chastity or incontinence is the best policy; that among the middle classes and the parochial authorities themselves, the poor-rate has too frequently induced a habit of fraud and litigation. We likewise find the early thrift, prudence and virtuous habits of the honest and industrious man, instead of enabling him to lay by a comfortable independence for the years of his declining strength, serving to accumulate a fund for the support of the idle, the improvident and the dissolute. Such are too truly the results of the Poor Laws as at present administered in the county of Leicester; in confirmation of which I refer to the evidence.

Principal cause of the foregoing Evils.

Injudicious admini-
stration of Poor
Laws; cause of
great increase of
pauperism.

Effects of injudicious
administration on
paupers.

On workhouses.

Scales of allowance,
consequences of.

Effects of injudicious
administration on
Settlement Laws.

On state of feeling
of pauper towards
overseer.

"Rights" of paupers.

Effects of injudicious
administration in
bastardy cases.

Injudicious admini-
stration, effects of
on vagrants.

System adopted by
magistrates the re-
verse of what it ought
to have been.

Erroneous under-
standing of intent, and
faulty application of

On one at least of the causes which have raised the poor's-rate to its present enormous amount, and which, by altering its original intent and purport, and by instilling into the minds of the labouring poor an idea of it foreign to its nature, have wrought such a lamentable change in their feelings and morals, there seems to be but one opinion; and it is not possible, with the evidence before me, unless I reject it as altogether false, that I can come to any other conclusion than that pauperism, if not entirely produced thereby, has been much fostered and augmented by the injudicious administration of the Poor Laws by the magistrates and their too partial interference with the business of the vestry. That this interference has arisen in most instances from praiseworthy motives, the leaning to the side of charity and humanity, the evidence fully warrants me in supposing; but still no one who reads that evidence, particularly as detailed at Kegley, Dishley, Castle Donnington, Loughborough, Ashby de la Zouch, Hinckley, Wigston Magna, Mount Sorrel, Melton Mowbray, and many other places, can doubt the mischief which such interference has occasioned. In many places it appears that the paupers have arrived at the greatest insolence and insubordination to the authority of vestries, solely from the idea which the existing administration of the Poor Laws has instilled into them that relief is their "right," not a benevolence charitably administered to their necessities. It seems clear also that in many places where workhouses, under proper regulations, might have been of the greatest benefit in discouraging pauperism, the injudicious interference of magistrates has materially lessened, if not entirely prevented the use of them; at Wigston Magna, it appears that their interference actually prevented such an institution. By indiscriminate scales of allowance, they have taught the pauper that character is of no consequence; that his being a pauper is quite sufficient to entitle him to his allowance, in his idea of the term, his right. By binding apprentices, as a matter of course, they have increased the evils of the Settlement Laws, and have aided, though perhaps unintentionally, the combinations of designing overseers to force their own paupers on other parishes, already over-burthened.

It can scarcely be doubted, when we consider the evidence of almost every parish officer who has presented himself for examination, that the state of feeling with which the pauper views the overseer who would curb his extravagance, repress his insolence, or resist his idleness, is engendered by the very magistrates who should punish him for it, while the same evidence shows that the pauper is by such conduct taught to consider the magistrate as his only friend, as the person who is to stand up for him, and see that the overseer does not cheat him of his "rights;" and that the vestryman, so far from being encouraged to lessen the evils of pauperism, considers his endeavours paralyzed, and ceases them from a feeling that remedy is hopeless. The bastardy cases eminently evince that mistaken lenity has aggravated the evil. The incompetence of the overseers to relieve vagrants, as stated in the evidence at Market Bosworth, Melton Mowbray, and Nether Broughton, shows that the indiscriminating liberality of magistrates towards vagrants has served but to increase their numbers and augment their insolence and impositions. Altogether I cannot but conclude, from the whole series of evidence that, as regards parish relief, bastardy and vagrancy, the system adopted by the magistrates has been the very reverse of what it ought to have been, unless the increase, not the decrease, of those evils could be supposed to have been sought; and that in every department of the system alike, the misunderstanding of the intent of the Poor Laws and their faulty application, have been the great causes of the mischiefs which have arisen.

powers of Poor Law, cause of all the mischief which has arisen from it.

State of Funds on which the Pauper depends.

Agriculture and trade
alike in a state of
decline.

Rates paid out of capi-
tal, not out of profit.

Farmers doing "very
badly."

How appearing.

On the state of the funds on which the support of the pauper depends, it is impossible that any evidence can be more clear, more conclusive, or more unanimous than that which every parish in the whole of my circuit through the county of Leicester has presented. Agriculture and trade, at least that portion of trade by which the poor's rate is most affected, the stocking trade) are alike represented everywhere to be in a declining state, and the fund which ought to be provided from profits, is now with difficulty collected from a diminishing capital: "Agricultural capital is decreasing fast;" "Farmers are doing very badly;" "If I do not give up my farm soon, I shall lose all I have;" "I have struggled hard, but cannot hold up much longer," were the only replies to my queries on this head. Great difficulty in collecting the rates, a general diminution of the quantity of live-stock, a diminished application of labour to land, a deterioration in the management and cultivation of

Presumptive proofs of the decline of farming prosperity.

Cause of unemployed agricultural labourers.

State of the land.

Diminution of live stock.

Farmers desirous to emigrate.

Why farmers stay on their farms when unprofitable to them.

State of manufacturing districts.

Masters make nothing by their manufactures.

Income of master manufacturers not derived from their manufactures, but from their capital.

Low wages of workmen, cause of.

of it, and in more instances than one a total neglect and desertion of it, are among the proofs, everywhere to be met with, of the truth of the assertion, that agricultural capital is declining fast. The following are amongst the statements made to me on this point: "I know it, by the difficulty I experience in collecting the rates;" "Levies cannot now be collected without regular summonses and continual selling-up of farmers." "The chief reason of our having unemployed labourers, is the increasing inability of the farmers to employ the quantity of labour which their farms require;" "The land is pretty good, under good management, but no farmer has means left to manage well;" "I never saw the land in so bad a state in point of husbandry;" "The farmers are unable to employ the requisite quantity of labour to keep their farms in condition;" "I know it, both by hearsay and by seeing the diminution in the quantity of stock in their fields," were also answers. Many farmers said, "We wish to emigrate, for we cannot get a living here, and would be glad to go if we could turn our effects into money without too great a sacrifice;" "but this," they add, "at the present time (when all want to sell and none to buy) we cannot do." All unite, farmers, and men unconnected with farming, in the same account. In the manufacturing districts the reply is to the same intent and equally melancholy: "Trade is doing very ill;" "The capital of the masters is fast declining;" "The masters are making nothing by their manufactures;" "Within the last 12 years manufacturing capital is decreased one-half in value;" "Our income is now derived, not from our manufactures, but from the rent of our frames, and the discount we get on the raw material;" "Though we have plenty of employment for our workmen, yet from the very low price at which only a sale can be effected, our workmen's wages are necessarily so low, that from the most laborious exertions they can hardly procure a subsistence, between 6 s. and 7 s. being the outside of what an industrious stockinger can earn per week." The foregoing statements will be found in the evidence taken at Kegley, Dishley, Sheepshead, Castle Donnington, Ashby de la Zouch, Market Bosworth, Hinckley, Wigston Magna, Kibworth Harcourt, Mount Sorrell, Nether Broughton, and Loughborough, being the greatest part of the parishes I visited.

Principal Causes of Decline in General Prosperity.

To my inquiries as to what might be supposed to be the causes which had brought about so general a decline in the prosperity of the country, I received various answers. Both manufacturers and farmers however agree that the poor's-rate, with its demoralizing influence, is the *principal*, if not the *sole* cause, which has reduced them to their present miserable state. Tithe, rent, highway duty, county rates, which latter are parcel of the poor-rate, the expenses arising from contested settlements and bastardy, are all accused of more or less oppressing the industry of the farmer; but the main-spring of the evil, without a dissenting voice, is the overwhelming and every-day-increasing poor's-rate. Tithes are spoken of in most places with great bitterness by the farmers, not only as a heavy burthen in themselves, but as a great bar to prosperity, inasmuch as they, in the words of one witness, "prevent the laying out of capital, and so hinder the farmer from drawing from the land the return which it is capable of furnishing." In the words of another, "hinder him from making the best use he can of the small capital which remains to him." The beer-shops, too, I found much inveighed against, as increasing the idleness, and consequent poverty, of the labourers, augmenting thereby the amount of the poor's-rate, and diminishing the sources from which it is drawn.

Poor's-rate principal cause of decline in general prosperity. Partial causes.

General dislike of farmers to tithes; a bar to prosperity by preventing outlay of capital.

Remedies suggested by the Evidence.

THE evidence on the causes of the present state of pauperism will at once suggest, that the only effectual barrier against the overflowing tide of pauperism must be sought in a complete and entire change in the principle upon which the Poor Laws have hitherto been administered. The consideration of the multitudes who are at present dependent on the poor's-rate for support, and who, having been educated, as it were, in the notion that relief is their "right," and that all prudent provision for future contingencies is folly, have secured for themselves no other resource, precludes the possibility, or even the wish for such violent transition as the immediate withdrawal of all aid; humanity forbids it; and I very much fear from the specimens which have been exhibited on much lighter occasions, that if charity should fail to step in between the parties interested, violence would arise to maintain what imposition and cunning have claimed, and what carelessness and weakness for so long a period of time have allowed. Happily, however, combined with the bane is found the antidote which will neutralize its effects. To tell even the able-bodied man that he shall not have relief, that he must find work or starve, would be considered by him an act of the most cruel injustice, a flagrant violation of his "rights," and would be resented accordingly; but if, without denying his right to relief, you assert yours to determine the mode in which the relief shall be administered, you take away from him all cause of complaint, and force him to the alternative of accepting meat and work. With the invariable success in discouraging pauperism which has ever attended the refusal of relief, except in the workhouse; with the constant confession of overseers and rate-payers themselves that they have been forced to build new houses, and enlarge old ones, as the only protection against the growing evil, and their acknowledgments of the benefits which have ever resulted from the practice,

Remedies: Change in the system of administration.

Considerations concerning.

Best effected by means of workhouses.

Workhouses.

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

Remedies :

it is astonishing to find that it has been so little adhered to. In the evidence such observations as the following are most frequent: "The House of Industry was established to keep down relief." "We entered into an association with Great Glen workhouse, in order that we might have a place to send our refractory paupers to." "Threatening the applicants with taking them into the parish-house has frequently prevented further application." "The paupers would have increased considerably more, but for the institution of the House of Industry." "The paupers have been much checked since the establishment of the House of Industry." "I am of opinion that if all applicants could be relieved in a house of industry that the number of them would be materially lessened," &c. &c. Yet with this opinion of the goodness of the principle, and with the proof of its correctness, in all cases where it has been tried, what has been the result? That it is nowhere resorted to but on very particular occasions, in very flagrant cases. The parish of Ashby de la Zouch is associated with 19 other parishes in a house of industry. The whole number in the house from all the united parishes is 5 able-bodied, 17 unable, 5 women able, 5 ditto unable, and two children; yet Ashby de la Zouch has 128 families of regular poor on the list, pays from 40*l.* to 50*l.* per month to its regular poor, and from 15*l.* to 20*l.* to its casual poor, yet the house was, as the evidence affirms, solely established to keep down parish relief. Kibworth Harcourt is in association with Great Glen workhouse; it has only eight paupers in the house, though paying to 33 families of regular poor, and to a considerable number of casual poor. Nether Broughton is associated in the Gedling workhouse, to which it pays 50*s.* per annum, for the privilege of being allowed to send its poor there; and yet, though the overseer complained of the weight of the rates, and stated that "from the number of unemployed labourers they had, they were forced to use the roundsman system;" and that "he was sure that many of them were great impostors, and might do if they would;" they have only one person in the house, an insane woman. Many other parishes are to be found which, though complaining of the number, the imposition and the idleness of their paupers, keep their parish houses for no other purpose, or very little, but as scarecrows, to frighten those "whom nothing else will frighten." Struck with the conclusions which might be drawn from the information of the overseer at Sheepshead *, that "they only sent unruly and bad characters to Shardlow workhouse, as there were some sorts which they could do nothing with if it was not for sending them there." I said, "By your own account you send those you can do nothing with to the workhouse; if it frightens the depraved and bold, still more will it affect those of a milder character. Is it not shortsighted of you to make so little use of the house, and is not this disuse of the house a great cause of your increase of paupers?" "Yes," was the reply; "but it costs us more to send our paupers to Shardlow than we can keep them for at home." Another witness, to the same question, replies, "We do not send a greater number into the house, because *at their own houses* they can maintain themselves at less expense than we can maintain them within the walls of the house." Thus is an established good principle, which has generally been found to repress pauperism wherever fairly tried, beaten down by a shortsighted parsimony, which endeavours to save a penny to day at the penalty of bringing upon itself the payment of a pound to morrow. But the immediate saving is very doubtful, for in many cases the scales of allowance which the magistrates compel the overseer to pay to out-door paupers, are higher than the cost of maintenance in the Shardlow house. The overseer may say to the pauper, (who, looking at the scale, sees himself "entitled" to a much higher allowance,) "Be content with 5*s.* and I will not send you into the house." The overseer may thus fancy that he has outwitted the pauper and got a balance in his own favour; but the system of deterring overseers through their apprehension of the magistrate, is not confined to one *clever* pauper; it creeps through the parish, inducing many to require relief *at home* who would never claim it within the walls of the workhouse, and thus, instead of two or three families on full pay in the house, the provident overseer has 20 on the half-pay list, at their own homes. Systems and principles, however good, can effect nothing unless they are persevered in. It has been well observed, that it is not the frequency of punishment but the certainty which deters; and though no position can be more clearly established by evidence than that a determination to refuse all relief but in the workhouse, is the most effectual means which can be brought to bear against the wiles of pauperism, yet owing to parsimony, vacillation, and carelessness, it seems never tried but to prove its goodness and to be thrown away. The overseers and vestries lay all the blame on the magistrates, stating it to be useless to adopt any principle to keep down pauperism, for that the magistrates "side with the pauper in every thing," and "do the very reverse of trying to repress the evil." To a number of overseers who came before me at Wigston Magna, I put the question No. 45, Town Queries, "What do you think would be the effect of making the decisions of the vestry final in cases of relief?" They answered, "We think it would be extremely good, but we should have no objection to have appeals to men who understand the laws better than we do, because, not knowing much about the matter, and having a great deal of business of our own to attend to, we should very likely get wrong." It seemed to be the idea of many to whom I put the same question, that they had too much to do to be able to give proper attention to the subject, and that they were not sufficiently qualified for the office. Mr. Eames says, (Evidence, Ashby de la Zouch), "Much, by good management and firmness, may be done towards

Answer to question
No. 45, Town Queries.

* Sheepshead paid the sum of 1,200*l.* as their share to the institution on coming in; they besides pay their share of the expenses. See Evidence, Sheepshead.

towards keeping down the poor's-rate; but, generally speaking, overseers have not energy enough; besides, they have too much of their own affairs to think of to give proper attention to those of the parish." All seem most strongly alive to the necessity of a thorough alteration, not only in the Poor Laws themselves, but in the mode and spirit in which they are administered. The evidence at Ashby de la Zouch says, "I think the administration of the Poor Laws wants as much mending as the laws themselves; for the very best laws, administered as the Poor Laws generally are, would be of no avail to resist pauperism." The evidence at Wigston Magna says, "We have all joined in a petition to Government, praying for some alteration either in the laws themselves, or in the administration of them." "If an overseer," says Mr. Mott, (Loughboro' evidence), "were appointed to manage the affairs of parishes, even at a high salary, it would be advantageous." Many intelligent men with whom I conversed on the subject were decidedly of opinion that the most effectual method of repressing the growing evil, would be for Government to appoint a certain number of magistrates for the express purpose of administering the Poor Laws, and who, giving their whole attention to the subject, might regulate their administration on fixed principles, which should form the rule and conduct of all alike. "It is our opinion," according to a large body of evidence from Hinckley, "that we can expect no relief but from an alteration, not only in the laws relating to the poor, but in the mode and spirit in which those laws are to be administered, and that if one or more responsible magistrates were appointed by Government, with a good and effectual police under them, who had the entire superintendence of the Poor Laws, such a measure would be of the greatest benefit, and do more to repress the spirit of pauperism, which is every day increasing, than all our combined efforts put together can effect, situated as we are between two fires, the magistrates on the one side, and the poor on the other." Duties which embrace the raising and application of so large a sum as the present poor's-rate, which, from small beginnings, has crept up to the enormous sum of seven millions and a half, and which is still progressing in its locust-like march, ought not to be left to chance, carelessness or ignorance; nor should parsimonious considerations prevent or retard the adoption of any measures which a prudent calculation, founded upon good and substantial evidence, may see fit to suggest: for whatever expense may attend any plan which shall secure a salutary alteration in the present system, it is surely almost impossible that it can exceed the benefits which may reasonably be expected; if any attention is to be paid to the evidence on the number and amount of idle and designing paupers now receiving parish relief, and who, under a better system, would be soon excluded from it, we have every reason to conclude that nothing but a more careful administration is wanted to secure a saving, in a short period, at least equal to one-third of the present expenditure, to say nothing of the beneficial change in the morals of the lower classes which such an alteration may be expected to originate. But whatever be the medium through which it is to be effected, an alteration, to be of any benefit in reducing pauperism, must work its way through a change in the ideas and feelings of the paupers themselves; it must gradually teach them that no man has a "right" to be supported by others; that his chief dependence should be on himself; that if from any unavoidable cause he becomes unequal to the task of self-support, work is the only condition on which relief can be granted; that assistance to the distressed is a benevolence, not a "right," the practice of which should be strongly recommended; but not, except in very particular cases, enforced; that charity need never be expected to relieve the idle or the profligate; that cunning and violence will equally fail before circumspection and firmness; that the wages of sin shall not exceed the rewards of virtue, or the profits of contriving idleness the earnings of spirited industry; that the only way for a man to be respected, is to act well; and that if he is happily able to acquire an independence to meet the wants of declining years, that it shall not be torn from him when he most needs it himself, to feed the idle, clothe the indolent, or administer to the vices of the impostor. Coupled with an alteration in the mode of administration, and in aid of it, an improvement in the police system is recommended by every witness I have examined on the subject. The village constable is every where represented to be perfectly useless as a policeman, and for any benefit he is of in that respect to his parish, his occupation might be dispensed with; indeed, from the success with which the paupers have used the weapon of intimidation in the enforcement of what they have chosen, I fear I may say been taught, to consider their "rights," it is thought in many places that an effective administration of the Poor Laws can hardly be established without a concomitant improvement in the system of police. The expenses to the counties occasioned by the incendiary fires, which it is presumed might in the first place have been prevented by a better organized police, would defray the expenses for years to come of its establishment. The burning of Nottingham Castle alone, with the injury committed in the neighbourhood, will cost the hundred, it is said, in which it took place upwards of 30,000*l*. Much money is stated to be annually thrown away upon the roads, from the ignorance of the principles on which road-making should be conducted, in those who have the management of the repairs. It has been suggested that the police and roads should form part of the duties of a Poor Law magistrate, the first necessarily, the second from the advantage it would give him in providing task-work for labourers out of employ. The Settlement Laws seem to want alteration almost as much as any part of the Poor Law system. They are represented everywhere as being causes not only of great strife, fraud and expense to parishes, but also as exceedingly obnoxious as preventing a free circulation of labour, and thereby obstructing the operation of a natural safety-valve, the carrying labour from crowded places where work is scarce, and consequently distress dangerous, to places in which labour is required, and

Bastardy.

Vagrants.

Lodging-houses.

County-rates.

Parochial divisions.

Beer shops.

Parish accounts.

Emigration.

Tithes.

Recapitulation.

where it might be beneficial. I found it often recommended that all settlements but those of birth and marriage, or birth, marriage and parentage, should be abolished. The weight of bastardy expenses was much complained of, and the remedy generally suggested was to enable magistrates to grant immediate warrants for the apprehension of putative fathers, on the fathers becoming in arrear to parishes: for "a previous summons," says the evidence, "only acts as a hint to the man to be off before a warrant can be issued for his apprehension*." On the head of vagrancy, necessity has sometimes suggested what wit has been slow to discover, that vagrants, like rats, frequent the haunts that are most strongly baited, and *vice versa*. Among the answers to my inquiries on this head, I find it strongly recommended that lodging-houses should be well watched and inspected by overseers and constables, as being generally the resort of persons of the worst character, and much encouraging vagrants. The county-rates I found complained of as very heavy; and a great desire was expressed that more economy might be observed in levying them. The present parochial divisions are objected to by many as causing an unequal division of the rate, as compared with the general amount of poor in a county, and as affording facilities for designing parishes and individuals to relieve themselves at the expense of their neighbours. It is considered that a division into sections or hundreds, as for the county-rate, would be preferable. Beer-shops are universally decried; and the repeal of the Act is generally desired. Only the worst sorts frequent them. They entice men to spend that money in drink which should be laid out upon their families. The farmers all say "the Beer-shop Act has proved a very bad one for this parish." I have no suggestions on the head of parish accounts, though from the state in which I generally found them, I should say that improvement is much wanted. They are generally kept best where assistant-overseers are employed. In many rural districts the parish books are full of erasures, and almost incomprehensible. I spoke to many farmers and overseers on the subject of emigration as a mode of relieving the weight of a superabundant population. The parish officers of Wigston Magna said, "We should be glad to join Government if they would assist us, and we know many families who would be glad to go;" and from the invariable success which I was informed had attended it in every case in which it had been tried, and from the considerable inclination towards it which appears among the labouring poor in many places, it might be inferred that it should not be without its consideration in any new plan for the alteration of the Poor Laws. As a help to lighten the burthens of the farmer, an immediate commutation of tithes is recommended. The general dislike to the system, and the acknowledged evils, both moral and political, which result from it, demand it. From the feeling with which I heard them everywhere spoken of, I should conclude that the tithe impropiators, both lay and clerical, will be deserting their own interest if they do not give any plan of commutation, though only tolerably fair, their hearty co-operation. In recapitulation, the state of the poor's-rate in the county of Leicester has been shown, as it has been found, in all places high; in many it is seen to equal the rental, in some to exceed it, and in some cases the land itself has been found unequal to its demand. The effect of it among the lower classes, both male and female, has been a very extensive demoralization: its consequence to many of the rate-payers a state little short of ruin. The causes which have principally brought about this state of things, and such remedies as have been suggested, have been detailed. The picture is a melancholy one, and the considerations which it induces are most serious. To make the lesson which it conveys applicable to every county†, we have

* As all attempts to decrease the frequency of bastardy cases must proceed upon the principle of operating rather on the mind of the woman than through punishment of the man, the system of badges (directed by the statute 8 & 9 W. 3, c. 2, s. 2, to be worn by all persons receiving parish relief,) might be resorted to with advantage in cases of bastardy. It might perhaps be advantageous to the parish, in a pecuniary point of view, and perhaps only fair, considering the nature and certainty of the punishment, to enact, that no parish officer be allowed to compel any woman to swear her child to any man, or to punish her in any way for having one, till she herself had applied for relief for it, (for many cases are made chargeable to the parish by the custom of parish officers compelling all women to swear their children, many of which would otherwise be provided for by the parent, or parents, or the woman's family, and many women are hardened into second offences by being compelled to undergo the shame of public examination respecting the first,) and on this account it would be advisable to let the child follow the mother's settlement. Second offences, &c., to be computed only from the number of children for which parish relief had been applied for. It might be advisable also (to prevent in some measure false affiliation,) to enact, that in whatever sum, in cases of application for relief, it might be thought necessary to fine the father, only a certain sum should be paid to all women alike. That warrants should be issued for all defaulting putative fathers after one month's arrear had become due, and committal to the house of correction enforced, till the sum due be either paid, or sufficient security given for it, and all expenses incurred in its recovery.

† To show what progress may be expected from the feeling of "right," a respectable individual informed me the other day, that in a parish in Yorkshire, (a county generally represented as more particularly free from the evils of the parish-rate,) an old woman, who had been several times to the vestry for her weekly pay, without being able to meet with the overseer from whom she was to receive it, was heard to exclaim, "I'll make 'em bring it to me another time, if I am to be bother'd in this way; my right's my right, and a body has no business to be put about so before she can get it."

In Jacob's Law Dictionary, Art. Poor, it is stated, "In 1803 an Act was passed, 43 Geo. 3, c. 144, for procuring returns relative to the expense and maintenance of the poor in England. Returns

were

have only to remember that the same rate which has so fearfully increased in the county under review has, over the whole of England, been raised in the sum of 3,000,000*l.* in the short space of 30 years, with the same effect in many counties, and with even a worse effect in some.

I have, &c.

Henry Pilkington.

were accordingly made, from which it appeared that the expense exceeded three millions annually." The author adds, "No effectual steps have yet been taken for decreasing the expense, or for securing the more effectual application of so large a fund." The three millions have now become seven millions, nearly eight.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

EVIDENCE.

KEGLEY.

Wages.

THE following is my examination of Mr. *Richard Calverley*, deputy overseer of the parish of Kegley:—"Do you receive any salary, Mr. Calverley?"—"Yes, sir, I am allowed 7s. per week." "What is the extent of your parish?"—"About 1,900 acres." "Arable or pasture?"—"Both." "Any wood?"—"None." "What wages are you giving now in your parish?"—"12s. per week in summer, and 9s. per week in winter." "Are all your labourers employed?"—"No." "What do you do with the unemployed?"—"Sometimes one thing, sometimes another." "Do you employ them yourselves? (I mean, speaking to you as a parish officer?)"—"Sometimes." "How?"—"We send them round to the farmers." "Who keep them?"—"We (the parish) keep them." "What do the farmers give you for their work?"—"They give the magistrates' allowance now; formerly they gave nothing." "Do those who are thus sent to the farmers do the full work of good labourers?"—"Oh, no." "Why do you not endeavour to abolish a practice which can only teach idleness, and encourage pauperism?"—"We do sometimes, but it's of no use; the men think they have a right to be relieved whether they work much or little, and the magistrates side with them; the men and the magistrates together beat us hollow. They compel us to make allowance according to their scale, by which labourers with families frequently get 15s. a week, and sometimes their rent, and some clothes besides. We have a labourer now from (the parish of) Mt. Sorrel, who is getting 15s. per week allowance." "Are your poor rates decreasing?"—"No, they are increasing very much." "I see by Returns which I have, that in 1829, you levied more than 629*l.* for the support of the poor; how will your levies be this year?"—"We have had six rates already of 95*l.* each this summer, and there will be five or six more before the year is out." "To whom do your cottages belong?"—"Mostly to the lord of the manor; we have seven or eight belonging to the parish." "Who do you let them to?"—"We never let them to any one; paupers are always put in by the parish." "Have you a select vestry?"—"Yes, but they never act; I do the business for them." "Is your bastardy list increasing or decreasing?"—"Increasing." "State the present number on your books?"—"We have twelve on the books now, and expect three more." "What is the allowance to a woman for a bastard?"—"Eighteen pence." "Is it always given?"—"Always." "Do you recover the amount from the putative fathers?"—"No; out of twelve we only get pay from five." "Are your cottages exempted from rates?"—"Generally." "Have you any employment for women and children?"—"At times they get jobs to run lace." "Are you a farmer?"—"I rent a small quantity of land, about 15 acres." "Is it your supposition that the farmers are doing well?"—"Very badly." "What do you consider to be the cause of their doing so ill?"—"Their being so oppressed by rates and rents at a time when corn is so low."

Magistrates.

Select vestry.

Bastards.

Putative fathers.

State of farmers.

Cause of state of
farmers.

I pass over much uninteresting conversation, nor altogether unimportant to the subject, the elucidation of which was the object of my journey, but which, if fully detailed, would run my Report into too much length.

DISHLEY.

Agricultural capi-
tal decreasing.

Road work.

Labourers' "right"
to relief.

Magistrates.

"Mr. *Smith*, you are, I understand, a considerable agriculturist yourself, and must be much conversant with land, as Sir Geo. Crewe's steward; do you consider agricultural capital to be increasing or decreasing in your neighbourhood?"—"Very much on the decrease, sir." "Are your poor rates increasing or diminishing?"—"Increasing." "To what extent?"—"The poor rate last year was 300*l.*; it will not be less this year than 350*l.* of which I pay 150*l.* myself." "How is your farm assessed?"—"Nearly at rack rent; the rates come to upwards of 3s. 6*d.* in the pound, on a valuation at rack rent, or nearly so. I am also very heavily taxed for road-work, having no less than 76 days' duty to perform with three horses and cart, and two men." "You say that labour is very little cheaper than it was 12 or 14 years back; is not that your fault; can you not accommodate your men's wages to the times?"—"No, sir, by no means; if we were not to give the labourer what he has been accustomed to, he would not work at all, but would throw himself upon the parish. If the parish refused to give him relief, he would tell them he had a right to it; he would go to the magistrates, who would order him relief according to their scale of allowance. The magistrates have made a great stand against us; they have forced us to allow a man here more by 2s. a week than is allowed in the county of Derby; last year they raised their scale to 3s. 6*d.* for a man, 2s. 6*d.* for a woman, and 1s. 6*d.* for each child; we have no chance against the magistrates."

SHEEPSHEAD.

SHEEPSHEAD.

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

State of farmers

Cause of farmers' decline.

Magistrates.

Shardlow house of industry.

Roundsmen.

Cottagers breaking down.

Married men.

Vagrants.

Bastards.

Mr. *Barker*, guardian of the poor, said, the parish of Sheepshead is incorporated with the Shardlow house of industry: the parish paid the sum of 1,200*l.* as their share to the institution on coming in; they besides pay their share of the expenses. To my question, "Has joining this institution lessened the amount of your poor-rates?" he replied, "No, the number of our poor is so greatly on the increase; last year we had eight levies at 10*d.* in the pound on two-thirds of the rack rent." "Farmers are not doing very well then?"—"No, they are doing very badly." "What makes you think so?"—"From general hearsay, and the very great difficulty I experience in collecting the rates." "What do you consider the cause of the decline in the farmer's prosperity?"—"His increasing burthens, at a time when every thing he has to sell is decreasing in value." "Have you a poor house?"—"We have a poor house of our own, into which we take the aged and infirm." "What do you send then to Shardlow?"—"Only unruly and bad characters; there are some sorts we could not do with at all if it was not for sending them to Shardlow. We have regard to character; the magistrates have none or very little; they make us pay their allowance; we give a great deal of relief out of the house, none in kind, all in money; we can only send to Shardlow one individual for every 50*l.* we have in the share of the house." "But you do not seem to send all you might send.—How is it that having paid so large a sum of money to join a house of industry, you do not make more use of it? Do you not think that the fear of being sent to Shardlow house of industry would induce many to use their utmost exertions to maintain themselves?"—"We think not; many do not care about going to Shardlow; it is considered rather comfortable* than otherwise; besides, we can keep them at less at home." "Is not this short-sighted idea a great cause of your increase of paupers? By your own account you send those you can do nothing with, and if it frightens the depraved and bold, still more will it affect those of a milder and better character?"—"Yes; but as I have said above, it costs us more, generally speaking, to send them to Shardlow than to keep them at home, and therefore it is that we never think of sending any but those to whom we will not give the magistrates' allowance, and whom we cannot manage at home." "Do you employ those whom you have in your own poor house in any sort of work?"—"A few in stocking frame work." "What do you do with your out-paupers?"—"We send them round to the farmers, who give us from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* per day for their work, we keeping them." "Do the cottagers pay rates?"—"We excuse about 10*l.* per annum of rates; the cottagers are continually 'breaking down' and coming upon us; we give preference to married men." "Are you much troubled with vagrants?"—"Very little." "With bastards?"—"Very much; we have now twenty on the list; we do not get above one-third from the fathers. The allowance of the magistrates is 1*s.* 6*d.* We have one Ann Bowles, who is receiving 3*s.* per week for two; she has had three. She was sent to the house of correction for her third. The parish have never thought any thing about emigration."

CASTLE DONNINGTON.

James Newbold, overseer, stated, "Farmers were eaten up by poor rates and high rents. I receive 30*l.* per annum for filling the office of assistant overseer. The rates have been increasing since Lady-day. The magistrates do a great deal of harm by their scales of allowance; for instance, a man of the name of Robert Smith is now on the road, only works half what he ought to do, has 11*s.* by order of the magistrates, and has five children living in the house with him, some of whom work, and he gets their wages; he sets the overseer at defiance, as he says he will not try to get work any where else, as he cannot have such good masters any where as the magistrates. It is quite a common thing for mere lads to get married in order to get families, and by this means get the benefit of parish allowance. The parish has 10 cases of bastardy; they get pay for about half from the putative fathers. The county rates very heavy, assessed on the property tax valuation, which is considered at rack rent, and now, in consequence of the fall in the value of land, in many instances higher than rack rent."

Magistrates.

Scales of allowance.

Impudence of pauper.

Bastardy.

County rates.

LOUGHBOROUGH.

At Loughborough I received the following information from Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Mott, overseers; from George Cresswell, master of the poor house and assistant overseer, (without salary), and from — Brock, Esq. a highly respectable solicitor of that town.

Mr. *Cartwright*.—We have a select vestry at Loughborough, of which there are four members who are changed quarterly—a bad measure, as the vestrymen are not in office long enough even to become acquainted with the detail of management. The poor are relieved partly in the house, partly out; the aged and impotent chiefly are taken in; we cannot take in all, but threatening the applicants with taking them into the parish house has frequently prevented further

Vestrymen.

* See description of the Shardlow House of Industry, and of the treatment of the inmates, in my brother's Report on Derbyshire.

Appendix (A.)	Reports.	Henry Pilkington, Esq.	further application. The manufacturing population generally is in great distress; a man cannot earn above 6 s. or 6 s. 6 d. per week, frequently working 16 hours. Men receive but low wages from their masters, and a man has very little incentive to work, since he can, by going to the magistrates, do much better for himself, for they will order the parish to give him much more than he can earn by working. The magistrates continually grant relief after the overseers have thought right to refuse it. "The only shield which the overseers have against the magistrates is threatening to take applicants into the house." Our magistrates are not particular as to character, as the case of William Orwood will show: this man had been flogged in the market-place for theft; he applied for relief, stating that he was only earning 4 s. 2 d. per week; relief was refused by the overseers. The man applied to the magistrates, who ordered the overseers to make up the difference to him between 4 s. 2 d. and 6 s. 6 d. Hitherto we have had no account of expenditure printed, but it has been determined to print one, and also to publish the names of those who receive relief.																		
Distress and wages of manufacturers.	Incentive to work taken away.	Magistrates.																			
Parish accounts.			Mr. Mott.—If an overseer were appointed to manage the affairs of the parish at even a high salary, it would be very advantageous. There is a rich charity in this town, which produces 1,500 l. per annum; of which from 500 l. to 800 l. is frequently given in aid of the poor's rate.																		
House of industry.			I am of opinion, if all applicants could be relieved in a house of industry, that the number of them would be materially lessened.																		
Pauper rent.			The amount of rent paid by the parish annually for paupers is very considerable; if their rents were not paid, the paupers would throw themselves wholly on the parish. In case of a bad character applying, we generally threaten to take him into the parish house, or the man and the magistrates together would beat the parish. Was it not for fear of the magistrates we should more frequently refuse relief; some rascals quite beat us. A fellow, of the name of Lockwood, married a very worthy woman of this parish. He has five children by her, whom with his wife he refuses to maintain. We have sent him to Leicester gaol for the last three months, but he still refuses, and, I am of opinion, solely from the reliance he has that, by the aid of magisterial interference, he shall beat the overseers.																		
Magistrates.																					
Emigration.			The greatest part of our poor are stockingers; there is plenty of work for them, but wages are so low, that even if a man works sixteen hours a day, he cannot get a maintenance. An Act, enabling parishes to tax themselves, in order to facilitate emigration, provided they could prevent the pauper from returning at some future period and claiming a settlement, would be advantageous to the country.																		
Vagrants.			The expense of vagrants, in the constable's book, from Lady-day to Midsummer 1830, is 12 l. 10 s. 8 d. I myself have paid 30 s. between the 1st and 8th of November, to vagrants, exclusive of those relieved by the constable; the vagrants are half Irish. The lodging houses are very bad places, the rendezvous generally of the most notorious and dissolute characters. The subject of vagrancy is well deserving the attention of Government. Vagrants are frequently made the means of fraud between one parish and another.																		
Lodging-houses.																					
Pauperism.			Mr. Cresswell.—The poor's rates are increasing, though the amount for 1832 is rather smaller than for 1831; the amount of the latter being 1,982 l. 19 s., of the former, 2,170 l. 16 s. 3 d.; but the amount levied depends upon the proportion in which we are assisted by the rich charity (mentioned by Mr. Mott). The amount of the rate levied at Loughborough is not always a criterion of the state of pauperism; the management, too, may at times be better or worse. I therefore consider pauperism to be increasing. Poor infirm people often get relief who have children able to take care of them; and relief is continually given to able-bodied men without their being set to work. I am of opinion, that the knowledge that the magistrates will order them relief makes hundreds apply who otherwise would make a shift to provide for themselves. The magistrates' scale of allowance is,																		
Imposition.																					
			<table><tr><td></td><td>s.</td><td>d.</td></tr><tr><td>For a man</td><td>3</td><td>—</td></tr><tr><td>For a woman</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Children under 8</td><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Child 8 and under 15</td><td>1</td><td>9½</td></tr><tr><td>Child 15 and above</td><td>2</td><td>—</td></tr></table>		s.	d.	For a man	3	—	For a woman	2	2	Children under 8	1	4	Child 8 and under 15	1	9½	Child 15 and above	2	—
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Child 8 and under 15	1	9½																			
Child 15 and above	2	—																			
Pauper defying parish authorities.			There is at the present time an obstinate reprobate in the parish, of the name of Charles Chester, who, a short time back, was in possession of three cows and 60 l. in money, which was left him. He soon spent all, and has now come upon the parish for relief, and sets the parish authorities at defiance; he has even, as he himself declares, "to spite the parish," married a woman from another parish, to increase the burthens of Loughborough. The police I consider to be very inefficient. The town is very large, and is surrounded by villages, containing a manufacturing population. We have only four police officers, at a salary of 1 l. 10 s. per annum. During the riots and disturbances at the time of the burning of Nottingham Castle, we had to send two miles for a magistrate. The yeomanry troop assembled the day after the riots began, and we swore in 60 special constables; yet all the force we could collect was quite ineffectual, and we were obliged to send to Nottingham for the regular troops.																		
Police.																					
Burning of Nottingham Castle.																					

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.Bastardy, extreme
cases of.

Bastardy cases are very numerous; we have 62 on the list at present. The magistrates order 1s. 6d. We have several aggravated cases. Three sisters of the name of Dalby, all with child by one man, and he a married man, were passed from another parish, in which they resided, to this, which was their settlement; all had 1s. 6d. allowed to them by the magistrates; two of the sisters are again with child by the same man! These two have been sent to the house of correction.

Mary White has had eight bastards by six different men; she is now married, and receives 1s. 6d. for her last child; for former children she has received for two at a time. Total expense of bastards for the last year as follows:

	£.	s.	d.
1st quarter - - - -	56	6	2
2d ditto - - - -	54	3	-
3d ditto - - - -	62	9	4
4th ditto - - - -	53	8	10
	£. 226	7	6
Recovered from the fathers - - -	152	-	-
	£. 74	7	6 loss to the parish.

To this loss should be added the expenses of recovering from runaway fathers. The expense is always considerable.

Mr. Brock.—It is now scarcely possible to effect a sale of property in this neighbourhood, at any price.

Decline in value of
property.

ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH.

I obtained the following information from *William Usherwood*, a stockinger on a small scale, one of the guardians of the poor. Ashby-de-la-Zouch is associated under the Act, commonly called "Gilbert's Act," with 19 other parishes, part of which are in Leicestershire, and part in Derbyshire, for a house of industry; Mr. Cresswell is the visitor of the house. We have no select vestry, nor any parish house, except the house of industry. I consider the number of paupers to be increasing, and that they would have increased considerably more but for the institution of the house of industry. The poor rate is assessed upon three-fourths of the rack rent; the parish being assessed on the sum of 9,629*l.*, the rates for the year 1830 amounted to 1,628*l.* 3*s.* 10½*d.*, for the year 1831 to the sum of 1,848*l.* 8*s.* 10½*d.*, but last year we paid off the last instalment of the sum of 500*l.*, which we had borrowed in 1825 for the erection of a new house of industry. We have at present in the incorporation house 16 adults only. The house at Ashby is not considered solely as a house of industry, as those who are unable to work are sent there, as well as those that are able-bodied; the whole number in the house from the 20 united parishes is five able-bodied men, 17 unable; five women able, five ditto unable, and two children. Ashby generally sends more than do the other 18 of the united parishes jointly; many of the other parishes have never had a pauper in it. They have joined in the house of industry in order to prevent the paupers from applying to the magistrates. I consider that paupers have been much checked since the establishment of the house of industry, for till that time it was impossible to contend with them against the magistrates' order. To my question, as there were so few paupers in the house, why the rates continued so high? Mr. Usherwood replied, "We have great numbers of out-door poor at present, 128 families regularly on the list, many of whom we consider casual paupers. The expenses for a month for out-door poor regularly on the list amount generally from 40*l.* to 50*l.*, whilst for a similar period the casualty list amounts from 15*l.* to 20*l.* We do not send a greater number of our paupers into the house, because at their own houses they can maintain themselves at a less expense than we can maintain them within the walls of the house; for the expense of keeping a family in the house of industry is at the rate of 3*s.* per head per week for adults, and from 18*d.* to 20*d.* for children." On my observing that this sum was higher than the cost at the Shardlow house, Mr. Usherwood replied, "We consider ourselves to behave better to the poor than they do at Shardlow."* I asked Mr. Usherwood whether he thought, if relief in money was refused, and a ticket to enter the house of industry was presented to such as applied for relief, that the number of applicants would be diminished? He said, "I think it would, for I have often given orders to paupers to go into the house, which have never been made use of." I pointed out to him the obvious inference to be drawn from his own statement. He said the house of industry was of no use against really desperate characters, and told me a story of a man of the name of John Bradbury, who had a wife and eight children; "this

Workhouses.

Magistrates.

Paupers.

* I would here again refer to the evidence contained in my brother's Report on Derbyshire, respecting the Shardlow house, and the treatment of paupers therein.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

Case of great
rogue and im-
position.

"this man," said Mr. Usherwood, "has put the parish to a great deal of expense and trouble; they first put him into the house of industry, but could do nothing with him, as he rather liked being there; and as keeping him there was a very heavy expense to the parish, they let him out again on his proposing to them to emigrate, which he said he would do if they would give him a sum of money; this they consented to, and he got as far as Liverpool, and there spent all the money they had advanced to him; he then came back again, and behaved as badly as ever; after a little while, however, he seemed to reform in his behaviour, and came to the overseers with a plan, by which he said they might get rid of him for ever. He told them that he could get plenty of work at Birmingham at his trade, that of a shoemaker, and that if they would give him 4*l.* to furnish 'a bit of a house,' he would go and take all his family with him without any further expense to them. The parish agreed to give him 4*l.* on the condition he named, and he, his wife and seven children, went to Birmingham. First of all, however, instead of paying for his journey out of the 4*l.*, as he promised to do, he left the parish to pay for it, which they did, thinking that they had even then cheaply purchased the redemption of his claim on the rates; but even in this expectation they found themselves deceived, for notwithstanding his declaration that he would 'rid them of him for ever;' after the lapse of a month he returned, his wife having been delivered of her eighth child during her absence at Birmingham. Before this, they said 'we had some misgivings about him,' he having written to demand a remittance of 5*s.* a week for four weeks, for his wife during her lying-in, and dreading the expense of a suspended order upon refusal, we determined, after some consideration, that the demand should be granted. The man, however, still encroaching upon us in proportion as we gave way to his demands, now refused, under plea of the increase in his family, to take less than 8*s.* a week, and as the parish did not quietly assent to this, he returned to Ashby. The parish had to pay the expense of his journey back, and they now allow him 1*s.* 6*d.* per week for rent, 3*s.* per week for himself, 2*s.* 2*d.* for his wife, and 1*s.* 4*d.* for each of his younger children; his three eldest are able to maintain themselves; their earnings are another source of emolument to this excellent specimen of what bad Poor Laws, and worse management, may effect."

Bastards.

Mr. Usherwood next spoke on the expense of bastards; he said "Bastards cost the parish last year 135*l.* of which only 41*l.* 12*s.* was recovered from the putative fathers, so that the loss to the parish was 93*l.* 12*s.* We have now 30 on the list; the magistrates' allowance is 2*s.* per week. Since I have been in office, it has cost the parish more in running after the fathers of bastard children than they have received from them."

Putative fathers.

Vagrants.

Mr. Usherwood gave me the following account of vagrants: "Amount paid in money, food and lodging for vagrants passing through Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in the year ending 1832; was 11*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.*"

Administration of
Poor Laws.

Magistrates.
Settlements.

Parish accounts.
Agricultural
capital.
Poor's rate intol-
erable.

Tithes bar to pros-
perity.

Mr. Eames, who had been guardian of the poor at Ashby-de-la-Zouch in the year 1822, said, "I found the parish in a very bad state; the rates very high, and the poor very insolent. By firmness I abolished the roundsman system, which prevailed at that time to the fullest extent, the farmers paying to the parish 10*d.* per day for the men; even harvest work was at that time done by roundsmen. Much by firmness and good management might be done towards keeping down the poor rates; but, generally speaking, overseers have not energy enough; besides, they have too much of their own affairs to think of to give proper attention to those of the parish. I think the administration of the Poor Laws wants as much mending as the laws themselves; the very best laws administered as the Poor Laws generally are would be of no avail to repress pauperism." The house of industry at Ashby-de-la-Zouch was established on account of the exorbitant relief which the magistrates were in the habit of allowing, an amount of relief which parishes could not afford. With respect to settlements, I have found them very fruitful sources of litigation to parishes, and the cause of their throwing away much money; I found it the best way to avoid disputes upon this subject as much as possible, and unless the case was very clear indeed, rather to take a pauper who might by possibility not belong to the parish, than to go to law about him, but it could not always be done. It would save parishes much money if the law of settlement could be simplified. The parish accounts are very badly kept in general, and it would be a good thing if a law enacting some regulation thereon were made. Agricultural capital is decreasing very fast; farmers are hardly able to pay rent at all. I consider the poor's rate a great oppression, inasmuch as it is a heavy tax, the amount of which can never be calculated upon or known before-hand with any degree of certainty, and which, though the farmers could bear up against it when corn was high, has now become intolerable. The tithes are likewise a great bar to agricultural prosperity, inasmuch as they prevent the laying out of capital, and so hinder the farmer from drawing from the land the return which it is capable of furnishing.

MARKET BOSWORTH.

Parish accounts.

At Market Bosworth I found great difficulty in obtaining any information; the overseer could tell little, and his books were scarcely intelligible, and full of alterations and erasures.

Emigration, suc-
cessful case of.

The following information I received from the landlord of the Dixie Arms. "Four years ago, having more men than employment, we borrowed 200*l.* to send off four families to America;

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.Inability of farmers
to employ labourers.

America; one consisting of a man, his wife and nine children, ditto of ditto and seven children, and two men and their wives, with three children each. We have heard from them since their arrival in Canada; they were all doing well, and all desired to express their thanks to the parish for their kindness in sending them." I asked him whether they had not still more labourers than they could employ? He replied, "We have." I asked him why, with such an auspicious beginning, the parish did not go on with emigration? To this he did not give any satisfactory reply, but observed, "The chief reason of our having unemployed labourers is the increasing inability of the farmers to employ the quantity of labour which their farms require."

From all the entries we could get at in the overseer's book, it appeared that the poor's rates are on the increase. The rate received for the use of the poor, from Michaelmas 1831 to Lady-day 1832, being 542*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.*; ditto, from Lady-day 1832 to Michaelmas 1832, 524*l.* 4*s.* 1*d.*, making in the whole 1,066*l.* 13*s.* 11*d.* It ought here to be observed, that since the year 1829, when the parish borrowed 200*l.* for emigration, they have paid off the whole. In 1828, by the Parliamentary Returns, the poor levy was 834*l.* 14*s.*; supposing them, therefore, to have been paying off 67*l.* per annum for the last three years, their poor's rate since the year 1828 will have increased upwards of 150*l.* per annum; and this, though they had rid the parish of 30 paupers, and consequently had them less to pay to. He added, "We expect them to increase still more; I myself pay from 10*s.* to 12*s.* an acre for poor assessment, which is enough to hinder any farmer from thriving. We do not now use the roundsman system. The magistrates' allowance for paupers is 5*s.* man and wife; children 2*s.* per head. We pay from 60*l.* to 70*l.* for rent for paupers." The principal owners of cottages are the trustees of Sir Willoughby Dixie, a minor, and a Mr. White, who has been assistant overseer, at a salary of 10*l.* per annum. The parish contains 3,000 acres of land, or thereabouts. I asked him if they were troubled much with vagrants? His reply was instructive: "Not now, sir; we were, formerly, much; but the times getting bad and the constable getting low of cash, he could not relieve them as formerly, so they have not come so much."

Consequence of not
relieving vagrants.

HINCKLEY.

At Hinckley we come to a state of things which appears so formidable as to require to be somewhat dwelt on. We find here that proprietors and non-proprietors are changing places; the proprietor doing little more than holding his own land for the benefit of another, and the poor's rates in many instances eating up three-fourths of the rent.

Proprietors and
non-proprietors.

Mr. Preston, yeoman, occupies of his own land	-	110 acres	} 155 acres;
rents of J. Grundy, Esq.-	-	45	

paid last year for poor's rates, 165*l.* 5*s.*

Mr. Bonner, yeoman, occupies of his own land 60 acres; paid last year for poor's rates, 60*l.*

Mr. Sanson, farmer, occupies 70 acres of land; paid last year to the poor's rate, 108*l.* 15*s.*

Mr. Checkland occupies 36 acres of land; paid last year to the poor's rate, 42*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

And all expect this year to have more to pay still. The above are taken at random from numbers of small proprietors and farmers, who crowded to the inn desirous of giving evidence; they all spoke with bitterness of tithes; they said, "The tithes hinder us making the best use we can even of the small capital which remains to us." They likewise were unanimous in stating their capital to be going very fast, and that it was impossible for them to hold up much longer under such a system. Since the year 1829, there has been an increase in the poor's rate of more than 1,000*l.*; the amount of the poor's rate for that year was 3,009*l.* 4*s.*

Tithes.

Farmers' capital
declining fast.

By inspection of the accounts laid before me by the overseer, I found that the amount paid for the poor alone in the year ending the 25th March 1831, was 4,107*l.* 4*s.* 5*d.*; the amount in the year ending 25th March 1832, was 4,127*l.*, showing still an increase upon the previous year. It was expected that the year ending in 1833 would be still higher.

Mr. Sanson, the farmer above mentioned, complained, that the road levies and road-work were generally very ill managed, it being very often left to the superintendence of overseers, who were tradesmen or manufacturers, and who knew very little about the matter.

With a view to ascertain the state of different classes, I asked Mr. Tomlinson, the intelligent landlord of the house at which I was staying, how he found the state of the returns from his business? Mr. Tomlinson said, "I am both a farmer and an innkeeper; with regard to my first business, it would be impossible for me, under any circumstances, in the present situation of this parish in respect to poor's rates, to get a living; and both my profits and yearly business as an innkeeper are greatly diminished; my house, the George, is rated at 44*l.* per annum, on three-fourths of which rent I have been called upon to pay 15 rates, each 10*d.* in the pound."

It was not very easy to get at any parish books; the accounts are kept by the overseers for the time being in private books of their own, with an understanding that they are to be entered

Parish books.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

Cottage rates.

Overseers.

entered afterwards in a public book kept for that purpose, but this part of the business is generally forgotten. I found, upon inquiry of the assistant overseer, that there had been a local Act obtained at Hinckley, by which the proprietors of all cottages under 6*l.* rent per annum are made to pay the poor's rates, under a composition 50 per cent. below the estimated value, which value is taken at three-fourths of the rack rent.

By their local Act they have also the power of appointing a rate collector. This Act was obtained on account of the difficulty of getting any rates from cottagers. There is a select vestry, which consists at present of 21 members, in addition to the churchwardens and overseers. Two overseers are elected every year, but only one acts at a time; one taking the first half-year, the other the second; a mode which gives very little time to either to become acquainted with the duties of his office, before he has to make way for another. I asked whether the overseers ever served in successive years? The assistant overseer informed me that they did not.

Poor set to work on
a large scale.

Thomas Vann said, "I have just been appointed assistant overseer, for the purpose of distributing the allowance to the out-door poor. My business is also to visit the houses of the out-door poor, and ascertain the nature of their necessities. The overseer collects the rates. We have a workhouse master at a salary of 30*l.* per annum, to superintend the management of the in-door poor. The paupers in the workhouse cost the parish about 2*s.* 6*d.* per head for their living only. The poor are never farmed. The aged and poor only are taken into the house, the great body of the poor being out-door pensioners. The parish is not divided into any wards or districts, but there are two adjoining hamlets which both pay to their poor, but have distinct highway rates. At present there are 85 inmates of the workhouse; 35 infirm and aged men, and 20 women of the like denomination; of children, 19 boys and 11 girls (of all ages from infancy to about 11 years.) There is little work done in the parish poor-house; hosiery work is the chief employment when work is done. Some time ago the parish bought raw material, provided looms, &c., and set the poor to work on a large scale at manufacturing stockings; but finding they lost 4,000*l.* by it, they gave it up." He admitted that they did not, in their calculation of losses, take into consideration, that with the exception of the raw material, looms, &c., all they got was clear gain, as the paupers would have received just the same from the parish, whether they had done any work or not. It did not appear clear, either that with better superintendence better results might not have been obtained, as far as regarded profit, to say nothing of the difference in moral effect, which idleness and industry would have on a pauper population, both as regards their greater abstinence from vice, and the greater tendency it might have to lessen their inclination to press upon the parish. It will be found in evidence which follows, that applications to the parish are too frequently the result of roguery, idleness and demoralized habits.

The discontinuance of this scheme of employing the poor at Hinckley must not therefore be considered by any means decisive, of the propriety of employing the poor upon a large scale. It must also be recollected, that many of the overseers were themselves manufacturers, and therefore not very likely to encourage a scheme to rival themselves in their own trade. It was found, too, that the town was so inundated with stockings by the measure, that prices fell to a very considerable degree.

Distress of farmers.

On the general distress of the agricultural part of the country, very many farmers, among whom were those already mentioned, stated that there could be but one voice; that capital had been long declining, and that total ruin must ensue, not only to farmers but to landlords, unless Government shall speedily take their case into consideration, and make an alteration in the Poor Laws, and other burthens which the farmer has to bear.

Decline of prosperity among
manufacturers.

On the state of trade, I examined Mr. May, a master manufacturer; he stated, trade is "doing very ill," not so much for want of orders as from the very low price at which it is necessary to sell goods in order to effect a sale, so that though we have plenty of employment for our workmen, their wages are necessarily so low, that from the most laborious exertions they can hardly procure a subsistence, between 6*s.* and 7*s.* being the outside of what an industrious man can earn per week; to get which sum he must work fourteen hours a day. I have known the time when a stockinger could earn 1*l.* per week. We have only one sort of manufacture, the "plain frame." I consider the decrease in the value of property within the last ten or twelve years to amount to one-half; the capital of the masters is fast declining in many instances; they are making nothing by their manufactures, their only income being derived from their frames, and the discount allowed upon the raw material. The rent of a frame is 1*s.* per week, and discount upon the raw material 10 per cent. Mr. May gave me the following scale of the possible earnings of a manufacturer and his family:

Rate of manufacturers' wages.

Decrease in value
of manufacturing
capital.

Man, if industrious and steady, working from 14 to 16 hours per day	- 6 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>
Woman sometimes as much as a man, but then she must be a very good hand, and either have no children or household affairs to attend to, or entirely neglect them.	
Children 8 years of age	- - - - - from 6 <i>d.</i> to 9 <i>d.</i> per week.
Ditto - 11 ditto	- - - - - 1 <i>s.</i> per week.
Ditto - 14 ditto	- - - - - 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> per week.

The above wages are calculated as clear earnings, independent of outgoings, as rent of frame, winding, &c.; winding costs 6*d.* a frame.

On

On examination of Mr. Vann, and such books and papers as he could procure, together with some in the possession of Mr. May, hosier, and Mr. Palmer, victualler, both being intelligent men, who had in their turns been in office, and who up to the present day had been in the habit of taking notes of matters passed and discussed at vestry meetings, I found that the following might be something near a statistical account of the parish of Hinckley :

Population - - -	6491	{	males - -	3,109	
			females - -	3,359	
Labourers employed in agriculture	-	-	-	-	97
Agricultural labourers not employed	-	-	-	-	21
Occupiers of land employing labourers	-	-	-	-	32
Males employed in manufacture	-	-	-	-	692
— retail trade	-	-	-	-	367
Labourers in trade	-	-	-	-	120
Other males differently employed	-	-	-	-	116
Wholesale merchants and capitalists, and professional persons	-	-	-	-	57
Male children, of all ages, and manufacturers out of employ	-	-	-	-	1,607
					3,109

The following information was given to me by Mr. Vann, Mr. May, and Mr. Palmer, and with the concurrence of the three :

“The number of acres is 3,500; the last assessment for the poor’s rate on the houses brought in 133 *l.*, the last on the land 200 *l.*; there are from 12 to 15 tenpenny rates made in each year for the poor, and seldom less than 13; also about two for the church and county rates. The land is generally valued at about one-half the rack-rent, in some instances at two-thirds, and in some near the town at about one-third; the houses generally at one-third; the rent of cottages is about 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 2 *s.* per week; gardens are not attached to them. In 1829 there were 1,160 occupied houses in Hinckley, and 90 empty ones; since that time the number is increased: of these only 406 formerly paid rates, 763 consequently being exempt, which latter, in consequence of the local Act, now pay rates. The houses belong to both landowners and tradesmen, but principally to tradesmen. There are 420 able-bodied paupers at present receiving relief; of these 360 are regular, 60 casual paupers. A short time back there were upwards of 1,000 paupers receiving relief; not less than 10 *l.* a week is paid for paupers’ rents. The bastards have occasioned a very great deal of trouble to the parish; they are an expense of between 130 *l.* and 150 *l.* per annum, of which not above half is ever recovered, the greatest part being lost in running after the putative fathers. The magistrates’ common order is 1 *s.* 6 *d.* The settlement laws have done this parish a great deal of harm, as numbers of boys, when trade is brisk, come in from the neighbouring villages to be hired as apprentices. Many of the villages which are thus getting rid of their own surplus population are not paying more, some not so much as 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound, though they immediately adjoin Hinckley. ‘Urged by the oppressive load of poor rate which we have to contend against, we are using every endeavour in our power to make a stand against the increasing demand for aid on the part of the poor.’ The poor no longer receive aid as the slightest favour, but as a right to which they consider themselves as much entitled as the landlord is to his rent. Schemes to impose on the overseer are very common. For the purpose of detecting such impositions, we have now got forms printed, which we take to the masters of the men applying for relief, to ascertain whether the applicants are at work or not, and we now do not give any relief at the vestry until the paper is signed by two rate-payers.”

Relief to able-bodied paupers.

Bastards.

Settlement laws.

Inequality of poor’s rates.

“We consider that the magistrates, by injudicious conduct towards idle and imposing paupers, have greatly increased both the amount of pauperism and the feeling of paupers respecting right to relief. The magistrates very seldom know the men, and on application of a pauper for relief, they are in the habit of sending him with a recommendatory letter to the vestry. Experience has shown that it is very dangerous to resist these recommendatory letters. Mr. Atkins, a hosier and overseer, refused to comply with the recommendatory letter of a magistrate; the mob assembled and threatened to pull down his house if the order was not obeyed. In case of a tumultuous rising on the part of the mob, the town would be entirely at their mercy. We have not a resident magistrate; our only reliance in case of tumult, would be on such military as might happen to be quartered near.”

Magistrates.

Right of relief.

Mobs.

Police.

“It is our opinion, that we can expect no relief but from an alteration, not only in the laws relating to the poor, but in the mode and spirit in which those laws are to be administered; and that if one or more responsible magistrates were appointed by Government, with a good and effectual police under them, and who should have the entire superintendence of the Poor Laws, such a measure would be of the greatest benefit, and do more to repress the spirit of pauperism, which is every day increasing, than all our combined efforts put together, situated as we are between two fires, the magistrates on one side and the poor on the other, can effect.” They thought much good might be done by some judicious alterations in the settlement laws, taking away all but birth and marriage, the wife following the husband’s settlement. “Suggestions for altering the bastardy laws we acknowledge we have none. We think, however, that if magistrates were enabled to grant a warrant against putative fathers neglecting to pay bastard arrears, it would save to parishes a great deal of money,

Responsible magistrates.

Settlement laws.

Bastardy.

Putative fathers.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

County rates.

Parochial divisions

Consequences of
settlement laws.

Incendiary fires.

for a demand of arrears only acts as a hint to be off before a warrant can be issued. We think that some check should be put to the power which magistrates have of spending money in magnificent gaols and bridges, and thus swelling up the county rate, particularly at a time when the pockets out of which the rates are to be collected have scarcely sufficient to meet necessary calls.

"We consider, also, that counties should be differently divided for the relief of the poor, into sections, for instance, or hundreds, as for the county rate; for that, at present, many towns have not only to keep their own poor, but those of many neighbouring villages; for the villages, when work is plentiful among the stockingers, pour all their surplus youth into the towns, apprenticing them to the stockingers, and thus gaining for them settlements. In many instances, too, where the neighbouring villages belong to one man, he endeavours to lower his own rates as much as he can, by getting such youths bound in the adjoining one, and prevents any increase of paupers by pulling down the houses."

All seemed unanimous in their opinion, that the day is not distant when rent must cease altogether. To my question, whether they had any knowledge of the causes of the incendiary fires which had taken place in the neighbourhood, they made very little reply; indeed they seemed rather to shun the question (which I have observed in other places); and one of them said, "It would not be over safe to have all we have talked about to-day mentioned in open air."

WIGSTON MAGNA.

The following evidence was given by Mr. William Tabourer, farmer, also assistant overseer, Mr. James Williams, farmer, Mr. William Pochin, landowner, farmer, butcher and publican, Mr. Thomas Turnbull, farmer, and several others, who crowded round me, as at Hinckley, anxious to give information.

The number of acres is about 2,944; no common: two-thirds of the parish is pasture and one-third tillage. Forty labourers are generally considered sufficient for the proper cultivation of the land, an additional number being allowed for harvest. The weekly wages are, on an average, for summer, 15s.; for winter, from 10s. to 12s. per week. In the harvest, extra men are hired by the farmers for ten weeks, at 12s. per week, and board. No difference is made between the wages of married and unmarried men; the magistrates' scale of allowance is 5s. man and woman; children above four years, 1s. 6d.; under four years, 1s. 3d. per head. It is necessary to resort to the roundsman system sometimes, but it is not liked; the parish does not otherwise know what to do with the labourers. The stocking-makers are almost useless to farmers. The cottages belong to a great variety of different persons; the rent of them is from 3l. to 5l.; some have, some have not gardens: nothing can be got under 4l. which has a garden attached to it. No land is let to labourers. The buildings are assessed at two-thirds of the real value, viz. 465l. 8s. 4d.; the land is assessed on a valuation of 3,953l. 3s. 4d. made in 1820, which is now much beyond its real value. Since the year 1820, the fall in the value of property has not been less than one-half, and it is not saleable at even that reduction. The parish is much in debt; it is "eaten up" by poor's rates. The following have been the levies for the poor for the years 1830, 1831, and three-fourths of the present year:

Levies for the year 1830	-	-	-	-	£.2,505
—	1831	-	-	-	2,070 :

In this year some levies, which could not be got in before, were paid in, which would of course lessen the amount of the levies for that year.

For the year 1832, as far as it has gone, they have } £.1,729 ;
collected for the use of the poor - - - }
and they have the winter before them.*

* Being at Leicester in the latter end of February in the present year, 1833, two of the above-named witnesses, Mr. William Tabourer, the overseer, and Mr. William Langham, farmer, came over to me, bringing with them two other farmers, Mr. T. Goodwin and Mr. J. Watson, all of them anxious to give me information of the state of things since my visit to them in November 1832.

They stated, that since that period they had been obliged to collect 863l. in addition to the 1,729l. poor rate then collected, and that before the conclusion of the year 1832 (which would not take place till the following Lady-day) they expected that two more levies of 216l. each must necessarily be made, which, when collected, would make the total levy 1,000l. more than the levy of the previous year, and between 400l. and 500l. more than that of 1830.

They further stated, that the levies could not now be collected without regular summonses and continual selling up of farmers; that property in land at Wigston is gone, and the tenant's capital is gone after it, in the vain endeavour to extract a profit from its cultivation.

They mentioned a case in which the land itself had been found insufficient to satisfy the demands of the paupers. In one district the paupers had been actually offered the free cultivation of the soil, on condition that the owners should be absolved from the payment of poor's rates. The paupers took time for consideration, and refused the offer, stating that "they liked the present system better."

They further informed me, that the whole of the rate-payers were preparing a petition to Government (which, I understand, has since been presented), setting forth the miserable state to which the Poor Laws had reduced them, and praying for some alteration, either in the laws themselves, or in the administration of them, for "the present system," they said, "must inevitably ensure, and very shortly too, the entire and total ruin of every individual of any property in the parish."

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

Magistrates.

Bastards.

Magistrates.

Houses of industry.

Magistrates.

Paupers.

Beer-shops.

The county rates for the same period have been regular, being 96*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.* for each year. The parish authorities consider the paupers to be masters, and that they are unduly supported by the magistrates. The magistrates seldom know the paupers, and continually order relief, which the vestry knows to be unnecessary. There is an assistant overseer, at a salary of 45*l.* per annum, and a workhouse master, at a salary of 12*l.* 10*s.* with a house and maintenance. The vestry is select, consisting of 15 members, besides the churchwardens, overseer and clergyman. There is only a poor-house for the old, infirm and children; at present 18 adults and 8 children are in the house; 208 families are in regular pay, and the casuals sometimes amount to 150. About 20 bastards at present, towards which only two of the putative fathers pay any thing. Magistrates' allowance from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* There are three women, each at present receiving, for two bastards each, 3*s.* per week. The mothers are seldom sent to the house of correction by the magistrates. Mr. Langham observed, "Our magistrates allow that sort too great latitude." Almost every week the orders made by the select vestry against the paupers are overruled by the magistrates.

On asking them why they did not join one of the houses of industry in the neighbourhood, they said, "We do not consider them well conducted; we tried to 'set up' one ourselves one year, but failed, through the interference of the magistrates, who would not allow us to keep the inmates within the walls, but came to the house of industry, and ordered us to let them out. The paupers do as they like with us, or nearly so. One part out of three of our rates is paid to fraud and imposition." There are 15 *public houses and beer shops* in the village, all supported by the labourers and paupers, for "the farmers cannot afford to go into one." The beer shop Act has proved a very bad one for this parish. We are not much troubled with vagrants; the expense has never exceeded 5*l.* or 6*l.* per annum.

Mr. William Langham said, "I have a house and small property of my own, and rent 285 acres; I have struggled hard, but cannot hold up much longer, unless the Poor Laws are altered, and that soon." The land generally is "pretty good," and would produce good crops under good management; but no farmer in Wigston has means left to manage well; the land would grow four quarters of wheat to the acre, four or five quarters of beans, and five and a half quarters of oats; one acre and a half of grass would feed a good beast, and would carry "from five to seven ewes and followers." Mr. William Tabourer, who rents 60 acres, said he could only repeat Mr. Langham's statement—"they were all nearly cleaned out."

Mr. James Williams, who rents 130 acres, said, "He had only rented it one year, and had had plenty of it."

Mr. Thomas Turnbull, who rents 146 acres, said, "I have only had it one year, and that is too long by 12 months. I mean to get out of it if I can, before I lose all."

Mr. William Pochin stated, "I have a house and 20 acres of good land of my own. I rent 40 acres more, and have many trades in addition, as publican and butcher, but can't get a living by all put together, and am losing my little property fast. The whole of the farms in the parish have changed tenants three times in the space of ten years." *Great part of the parish was entirely, at one time, given up and thrown out of cultivation for the purpose of avoiding the poor's rates.* They all observed that they found it impossible to keep their land in order, as "they cannot afford to employ sufficient labourers," and are forced to sell hay and straw to meet their "head landlords," as they called them, the *paupers' rent days*, which generally come from ten to thirteen times a year. They stated a fact also *well worthy the consideration of landlords in general*, "that one of the principal farms in the parish was held under covenant, that the landlord should pay the poor's rates." I asked them what they thought would be the effect of an enactment enabling parishes to tax themselves in order to facilitate emigration? They said, "We should be glad to 'join Government,' if Government would assist us; we know many families who would be willing to go, but being now in debt 1,200*l.*, we do not see how we could raise any further sum. We should be very glad to go ourselves if we could turn our effects into money without too great a sacrifice; but this we fear we could not do at the present time." I inquired whether they could propose any alteration in the law of settlement to diminish fraud and litigation? They said, "The settlement laws have been of very great detriment to us, inasmuch as the magistrates have allowed men little better than paupers to take as many as five or six apprentices, whom they were neither able to feed nor even to teach a trade. This is done by the masters for the sake of a small apprentice-fee, and the neighbouring parishes find the fee for the sake of getting rid of the pauper children. These apprentices soon marry, many of them whilst almost children, for the sake of the parish allowance. Many neighbouring parishes have, by apprenticing their pauper children in other parishes, got rid of their surplus population, and are not paying more than 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, while we are paying 20*s.* in the pound. We think, therefore, that the poor should be supported by the counties, or at any rate by large divisions of those counties, instead of the present system of parishes." I asked them what they thought would be the effect, immediate and ultimate, of making the decision of the vestry or select vestry in matters of relief final? They said, "It would be extremely good; but if the magistrates would only look into cases further than the surface, and act fairly by us, we should have no objection to have appeals to men who understand the laws better than we can pretend to do, because, not knowing much about the matter, and having a deal of business of our own to attend to, we might very likely often get wrong." An old man who was present, mentioned, that the parish, 50 years ago, got a rate in aid from an adjoining parish, *because*

State of farmers,

and of farms.

Emigration.

Settlement laws.

Decision of vestry
final.

Rate in aid.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.

because the poor cost the parish 1 l. per week, and that the parish called upon for the rate in aid was forced to make a pauper, or, in other words, gave relief to one of their own parishioners who did not want it, in order to get rid of the rate in aid.

From what I learned, I consider that rent will soon cease at Wigston Magna, if it has not already done so in many cases, the farmers seeming to think that the poor's rates are more than sufficient rent.

KIBWORTH BEAUCHAMP.

Bastards.

Kibworth Beauchamp is one of the divisions of a parish having Kibworth Harcourt and Smeeton Westerby for its other two component parts. Of Kibworth Beauchamp I got the following intelligence from the overseer. The rate is laid upon the full value of the land, as valued upon its inclosure, and the rates are increasing. We have at present eight bastards, which cost the parish 15s. 6d. per week. Of the money which ought to be paid by the putative fathers we lose a great deal. One woman has four bastards all grown up; but she is now in the Leicester Asylum. She costs the parish 10s. a week, besides washing and clothing. Another woman has two bastards, but as she is now married to a man who is not the father of either, the two children are both chargeable to the parish. From one of the fathers the parish has never received sixpence. This man's child has cost the parish above 60l. already, and is likely to cost a great deal more. Of the eight mentioned above, the fathers of two have never been found. The parish contains upwards of 1,000 acres. We paid last year to the poor rates rather less than the year before, having paid last year 560l., whereas the year before we paid 595l. This year we expect an increase, but I cannot say what, having already paid 430l., and the winter, when the rate is always heaviest, is yet before us.

KIBWORTH HARCOURT.

At Kibworth Harcourt I got the following intelligence from Mr. Thomas Franks, churchwarden, and Mr. William Stone, guardian of the poor.

The number of acres in the three districts of this parish is 3,800. The population of the three divisions is as follows:

Kibworth Beauchamp	-	-	-	-	-	604
Kibworth Harcourt	-	-	-	-	-	421
Smeeton Westerby	-	-	-	-	-	475

Workhouses.

The district of Kibworth Harcourt contains about 1,250 acres, the greatest part of which is pasture. We entered into association with Great Glen workhouse, under the provisions of Gilbert's Act, "that we might have a place to send our refractory paupers to. We find it quite useless going to the magistrates against a pauper, as the paupers are sure to beat us when we come there." We only send those to the Great Glen workhouse to whom we do not choose to give the magistrates' allowance. We have only eight in the house at present; among them are an old woman, an insane person. We are paying to thirty-three families of regular out-door poor, and to a considerable number of casual poor; we do not know exactly how many. I asked them how it happened, that their poor increasing, and the parish having become associated in the Great Glen workhouse, they did not make more use of that workhouse. "Is it," I added, "from any objection you have to the system of the house?"—"Oh, no, the workhouse master has certainly a very good character for that; he does keep them well, there is no complaint against him for that; but the expense we consider greater than they would cost us at home, as we have to pay 3s. a head for every man we send, and 2s. 6d. for women and children."

Settlements.

We do not know the present valuation of the parish; we act upon one made in the year 1780. We want a new one very much, as the land is rated very unequally; but we are afraid of the expense. We have had ten levies of 76l. 10s. 2d. each, every year, for the last five years. The levies are made at 1s. in the pound upon a certain sum laid down in an old book in the church; we cannot now get at the book. A great many cottages belong to the town into which we put paupers, and the parish take a great many more to prevent fresh paupers settling in the parish. We have a good many bastards, but we do not know the number; some receive pay for two. We have been put to great expense and trouble about settlements; have had as many as five trials in one year regarding settlements. Our paupers are chiefly agricultural labourers out of employ. We expect to have many more out of employ in the winter.

State of farmers.

William Amshaw has only a small house, a public house, and two acres of land, yet he has to pay in the course of the year ten levies of 16s. 6d. each to the poor.

Mr. Franks, an innkeeper and farmer, stated, "I know no farmer who is doing well; I never saw the land in so bad a state in point of husbandry, which is owing to the poverty of the farmers, principally caused by the poor's rates." I must here call attention to the answers to queries sent in from Kibworth Beauchamp and Kibworth Harcourt.

BROOKSBY.

This village consisted only of two houses and the church. One house was uninhabited, and the other, "the mill," was only inhabited by a widow of the name of Ives, who acted as

overseer

overseer and churchwarden; she informed me that the church, the manor-house and the mill, were the only three buildings in the parish; that the manor-house belonged to a minor, and had not been inhabited for many years; that the land is let to farmers in the neighbouring villages. She likewise stated that she had been forced to raise the rates, and showed me her book in proof. I was rather astonished at the existence of paupers in a village of two houses, and one of those the residence of the squire. Mrs. Ives said, "The paupers I pay to gained their settlement in the squire's house, at least so I believe, and most of them live at Hinckley. I annually pay 5*l.* 8*s.* for the rent of one pauper's house, of the name of T. Walton, living at Hinckley, besides sundry sums to his family." She asked us whether we did not think 5*l.* 8*s.* a high rent for a pauper? and gave me the following account of her poor levies:

					£.	s.	d.
For the year 1829	-	-	-	-	42	6	6
1830	-	-	-	-	35	6	6
1831	-	-	-	-	48	11	6

MOUNT SORRELL.

Mr. Ives said, "The rent is absorbed in poor's rates; in many instances 2*l.* per acre is paid for poor's rate, and we expect to be still worse this winter. We once joined in the Barrow House of Industry, but it has done us little good, for the magistrates were the very reverse of helping us to keep down the poor's rate. I myself intend to quit the country as soon as I can possibly get rid of my engagements." I heard the above account confirmed in every quarter.

Rent absorbed in
rate; 2*l.* per acre
paid for poor's rate.
Magistrates.

MELTON MOWBRAY.

In the following conversation which I had with Mr. *Anthony Smelt*, one of the overseers of the poor, and Mr. *William Topps*, the assistant overseer of Melton Mowbray, will be comprised what I have to say concerning that place.

"Have your poor-rates increased or decreased?"—"They have increased this year, though they are lower than they were some time back; the total amount for the year, from Easter 1830 to Easter 1831, was 1,457*l.* 4*s.* 3*d.*; that for the year Easter 1831 to Easter 1832 was 1,514*l.* 4*s.* 3*d.*; but we have had a good many out of work, and we cannot let them starve; the magistrates cannot bear to see the poor distressed." "Do you think that they are the really distressed who appeal most to the magistrates?"—"No, sir, there's a many of them very shifty, and they would make a point of going to the magistrate if we did not do well to them, because they know he is a very humane gentleman." "Then does this fear of their going to the magistrates make you relieve men you otherwise would not relieve?"—"Yes, certainly, we know it would be of no use to refuse them."

Paupers very shifty.
Magistrates very
humane.

The bastardy cases I found to be very numerous and increasing. I said to the overseer, "Why do you not try to lessen the number of these cases?"—"How can we do so, sir?" "By punishing the authors of them; do you always commit for second offences?"—"Never, sir; the magistrates are supposed to think it very severe, and not to like it, so we do not ask them to commit." "Are you much troubled with vagrants?"—"Very much indeed." "Do you examine their passes, and if they have not any, or have forged them, or you find their statements false, do you get them committed?"—"No." "What then?"—"We are not in the habit of asking them many questions; we generally take them to the poor-house, give them a good meal, and send them off." "Do you think such a method calculated to repress their applications?"—"No, sir, but if we were to take them to the magistrates, they are very kind gentlemen, and would rather give them something out of their own pockets than see them in want; we took a man one day, whom we suspected was tricking us, but one of the magistrates gave him a shilling out of his own pocket, which the man, when he came out of the justice-room, held up in triumph before us, abusing us grossly, and saying, 'If the magistrates had no more compassion on a poor man than such as you have, he might be starved to death.'"

Bastards.
Magistrates.
Vagrants.

Magistrates.

NETHER BROUGHTON.

Nether Broughton was the last place which I visited, which I was chiefly induced to do from understanding it to be inhabited principally by small farmers, their labourers, and a few stockingers. The overseer, Mr. *John Beet*, a farmer, said, "We have one overseer of the poor at present (myself), two churchwardens, and one constable; no select vestry, and no poor-house. We pay 50*s.* per annum to the parish of Gedling, in Nottinghamshire, for the privilege of being allowed to send our poor to the workhouse there; we pay also 3*s.* 6*d.* a head, besides finding them with clothes, for every individual we send there. We have only one there at present, an insane woman; we should send more there, but find it more expensive than keeping them at home. We have stockingers both in the cotton and woollen trade; also more agricultural labourers than the farmers can employ; the surplus we send partly on the roads, partly to the farmers on the roundsman system; we think both plans bad, but do not know what to do with the men. The farms in the parish are small, and the farmers

Workhouses.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Henry Pilkington,
Esq.Farming capital
declining.
County rates.
Magistrates.
Paupers.

Bastards.

Vagrants, way to
get rid of.

"Rights" of boys.

Advantage of early
thrift and economy.

are unable to employ the requisite quantity of labour to keep their farms in condition. Farming capital is declining fast; I know it both by hearsay and by seeing the diminished quantity of stock in the fields. Poor-rates are increasing, though not much. The total amount of poor and county rate for 1830 was 199*l.* 16*s.* 11*d.*; that for 1831 was 200*l.* 3*s.* 9*d.*; of this, about 43*l.* was for county-rate. We expect the poor's rate to be much higher this year than the last: county rates also are expected to be much higher this year than last, owing to expenses incurred in Leicester gaol. I think that magistrates, when they order great expenses for county buildings, forget who have to pay for them. We are paying to 13 families of regular poor per week; many of them are great impostors; I am certain that they might do if they would. I do not complain to the magistrates, because it is of no use, they cling to the paupers so; Mr. — is ready to take our heads off if we go, he is so harsh with us—I hate to go abominably. I pay 6*s.* a week to a man of the name of Hobkins, who is ill, and brought on his illness entirely by drunkenness. I went to see a man last week now receiving 6*s.*; he is ill, and wants 10*s.*; he says he is starved to death, and yet I know he cured one of the fattest pigs in the country last year. The magistrates allow 2*s.* a week for bastards at present. I am paying one woman 4*s.* a week for two, though she is married; she was just 'at down lying' of her third when she got married. The parish don't get half of the money from the fathers, and a great deal of that is lost by running after them. We have plenty of tramps; I have paid to between 20 and 30 in a week; I have not so many now, *as we cannot relieve them as we have done.* I wanted to get off the custom of paying boys for *sparrow and hedgehog killing*, but the magistrates said they would have the custom kept up, and that the farmers were shabby fellows for desiring to leave it off. The land in Nether Broughton is three-fourths grazing, and one-fourth arable; about 2,000 acres in the whole parish. I rent a small farm of 24 acres; I have seven acres under the plough, and the remainder in grass; I milk five cows, and bring up three or four young calves every year. The land will not grow turnips, or give more than four quarters of beans and three quarters of wheat to the acre. I owe all I have to early thrift and economy, as I and my wife began the world with nothing. I cannot now make both ends meet, though the efforts of the whole family are combined for that purpose; my wife and daughters take in lace to spot at their leisure hours, for which they get now very badly paid, not more than 2½*d.* or 2½*d.* for a thousand spots. If I do not give up my farm soon, I shall lose all I have; it is very hard that I should be forced to contribute to the support of others when I can hardly support myself. Many of those whom I contribute to support might, I am certain, if they chose to be thrifty and economical, better afford to give assistance to me than I can to them. The farmers in this parish are losing their capital fast."*

* LEICESTER.

Is behind no town
in the grievousness
of its burthens.Furnishes to the
poor's rate a sum
little short of
14,000 *l.*Rates increasing in
every parish.

It may appear strange that, in a Report upon the Poor Laws, and their administration in the county of Leicester, I bring forward no evidence relating to so large and so important a portion of it as its county town. This is not owing to my not having visited it, or because I did not find in it matter well worthy of investigation. I visited it twice, at two separate periods, and finding that it was suffering under more than common burthens in every department of the Poor Laws, I took the utmost pains to unravel the causes which had led to such a disastrous state of things; and the evidence which I took in pursuit of this object would fill a volume of itself; but finding that part of it which related to the administration of the Poor Laws on many points contradictory, and having no power to administer an oath, or to compel the attendance of unwilling witnesses, I have thought it better to omit the whole. The purpose of my inquiries was not to detect or to expose any particular cases of mismanagement, but to obtain premises for general conclusions; in the words of my instructions, "to dwell principally upon those facts from which some general inference may be drawn, and which form the rule rather than the exception;" and my Report, even without further evidence, appears to me to contain enough of undisputed facts to sustain the inferences which I shall add to it, without stating others which may be made the subject of controversy. That Leicester is behind no town in the grievousness of its burthens, in the necessity for an investigation into the causes of those burthens, and for an alteration in the system under which they have "grown and strengthened," may be collected from the following statement, which must be undisputed alike by all parties; viz. that the different parishes of the town of Leicester, six in number, were obliged to furnish last year (1832) collectively to the support of the poor, a sum little short of 14,000*l.*; that the poor's-rate, since the year 1825, the first of which I have any account, when it was 9,182*l.*, has, with various fluctuations, sometimes even higher, sometimes lower, been gradually increasing to the present enormous amount, and that an expectation, founded upon the collections already made, is general among the overseers of all the parishes, that a still further sum will be wanted for the year now going on (1833)—a state of things, upon which it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than that, if not checked by timely interference of the legislature, this dreadful evil threatens, at no very distant period to paralyse the industry and swallow up the property of the whole town.

Henry Pilkington.

No. 25.

REPORT from Major William Wylde, R. A.

PART I.

REPORT on the Administration of the Poor Laws, and the Management of the Poor,
in the County of Nottingham.

THE county of Nottingham has first occupied my attention as an Assistant Commissioner, appointed under the Poor Law Commission. This county appeared to possess strong claims to consideration. It is the first county situated north of Trent; it forms an important part of the boundary line, which divides the agricultural from the manufacturing district in this portion of the kingdom; it is occupied by a powerful and opulent aristocracy, as well as by large landed proprietors among the gentry; with an independent and respectable yeomanry united to an industrious and intelligent agricultural and manufacturing population. The bonds of social confidence between the landowners and occupiers have not yet been broken, as the tenantry, almost without exception, hold their lands from year to year at the will of the landlord.

Nottinghamshire;
its situation and
circumstances.

Under these circumstances, I have deemed it expedient to select Nottinghamshire as the first object of investigation; where, having placed myself at Southwell, as its centre, I have originated my inquiries by ascertaining the administration of the poor laws and the management of the poor at Southwell and in the surrounding districts.

Southwell.

SOUTHWELL.

First.—THE FORM IN WHICH RELIEF IS GIVEN.

I. RELIEF IN KIND.

AT Southwell, and in the surrounding district, relief in kind is restricted to the parochial poorhouse at Southwell, and to the incorporated workhouse situated in its immediate vicinity, and to medical assistance, without lodgings and without land.

I. Relief in kind.

Southwell has a poorhouse confined to its own poor.

Rental of the parish of Southwell in 1815	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£. 10,462
Population in 1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,384

Forty-nine parishes in the neighbourhood of Southwell, situated principally in the hundred of Thurgarton, are incorporated under Gilbert's Act, 22 Geo. 3, c. 83; rental of these 49 parishes in 1815	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£. 106,401
Population in 1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,874

Southwell poorhouse has a garden attached, containing one rood; a pasture close of five acres, about half a mile distant, for cow-keeping; and arable land, one acre, distant about a mile, reserved for employment of sturdy paupers in spade culture.

The incorporated workhouse has a garden, containing one acre and a half, with eight acres and a half of grass land attached to the house, on which ground cows are kept.

At Southwell poorhouse, a school-room for the children is regularly opened during the winter months, with a schoolmistress. In this school the children of the poorhouse, as well as the children of able-bodied labourers having more than four children under ten years of age, are taught to read, knit and sew. The children of such labourers breakfast, dine and sup at the poorhouse, and return to their parents in the evening. The children in the poorhouse are kept apart from the other inmates during the night and during the school-hours. At other times they remain in the female wards. Their religious and moral education appears to be duly attended to.

The inmates of the Southwell and the incorporated workhouses are employed; the males chiefly in cultivating the garden, and occasionally in breaking stones for hire within the premises; the females are occupied in domestic duties, such as washing, spinning, mending linen and apparel, for which works the number of females is not more than sufficient. But it is to be remarked, that labour, beyond the performance of gardening and household work, does not constitute any essential part of the anti-pauper system, of which the object is not to prosecute employment within the house, so much as to prevent residence therein from being an object of desire or indifference to the able-bodied poor, by restrictions on leaving it, and on the admission of visitors, by the separation of the sexes, and by the prohibition of fermented liquors and tobacco; which measures have succeeded perfectly, as will appear by the above statements respecting the inmates now in the Southwell poorhouse and the incorporated workhouse.

Reports.
Major W. Wylde,
R. A.

The parochial poorhouse of Southwell, and the incorporated workhouse, are under precisely the same system of management. The chief question arising upon the union of parishes for such purposes seems referable to the economy necessarily occasioned by apportioning the salaries of the governor, the matron, the surgeon and the treasurer, as well as the chaplain, if such an appointment be made, among a greater number of paupers. These offices are denominated the establishment; but the cost of them attaches proportionally to the maintenance of each pauper.

The several Acts of Parliament relating to workhouses are well understood at Southwell; and it is presumed would be sufficiently explained at any petty sessions in other parts of the kingdom to parishes desirous of carrying such provisions into operation.

It is Mr. Becher's decided opinion, that the laws do not empower any magistrate to order relief in money for any able-bodied pauper; and he recommends an enactment, prohibiting relief to an able-bodied pauper out of the workhouse or poorhouse in any parish having the use of such an establishment. Such has been the constant rule of his practice during the last 10 years.

By this principle, adopted in the administration of the poor laws, the able-bodied labourers in these parts have been almost wholly compelled to maintain themselves and their families; so that he conceives one of the main instruments for resisting pauperism to be, the sole alternative between relief in a well-disciplined workhouse, and self-support by the exercise of free labour.

Therefore he would not only interdict the magistrates from such interference, but would render it illegal for any overseers of the poor of any such parish to grant relief out of the workhouse to an able-bodied pauper, unless the same shall have been directed in writing by a general, or by a select vestry, and unless every able-bodied person so relieved shall be employed wholly by the parish.

In Southwell, and in the surrounding district, every parish contracts with some medical practitioner for attendance on the poor at a stipulated salary, including medicine and journeys. This contract extends to all the poor legally settled in the parish, and to the casual poor, but not to resident paupers who have settlements elsewhere.

The rates of stipend to the surgeons are as follows:—

PARISHES.	Population in 1831.	Distance from Medical Practitioner.	Annual Stipend.
Southwell - - - -	3,384	- - - -	£. 30 - -
Thurgurton - - - -	329	3 miles	3 3 - -
Kirklington - - - -	243	4 miles	2 2 - -

The parish of Southwell possesses seven cottages for the poor, and in each of the surrounding townships there are generally a few parochial cottages. These are occupied almost invariably by widows, or by labourers entitled to more than ordinary protection by reason of infirmity or good conduct.

If an able-bodied labourer occupies any such cottage, he pays no rent; if the number of his children under 10 years of age amounts to four; if three in number, he pays 1 1/2 d. weekly; if two, 3 d.; if one, 4 1/2 d.; if none, 6 d.

Rents were formerly paid for paupers at Southwell to the amount of 184 l. annually. At present no such rent is paid.

II. RELIEF IN MONEY.

II. Relief in money.

Relief in money is confined to aged or infirm poor or to occasional relief during sickness, when the family is numerous.

1. The Persons to whom Relief is given.

1. The persons to whom relief is given.

In Southwell and the surrounding district parochial relief is confined to those denominated the "impotent poor" in the Act 43 Eliz. c. 2. Lunatics are sent to an asylum near Nottingham, established upon a large scale by voluntary subscription and by the county of Nottingham. When discharged as incurable or inoffensive, such lunatics are sent to the workhouse, as well as harmless idiots; but such lunatics or idiots as may be dangerous are detained in the asylum above mentioned.

The rate of relief afforded weekly to the diseased is regulated by the ability of the applicant, and the extent of his necessity. The weekly allowances to the aged and infirm, not in the workhouse, vary at Southwell from 1 s. to 2 s. 6 d. The sum so paid during this week, on the 31st August 1832, in my presence, for the whole of such weekly pensions, was 5 l. 3 s. 3 d., including bastards.

Orphan children are maintained in the workhouse at Southwell and in the incorporated workhouse.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major W. Wylde,
R. A.

The clause of 43 of Eliz. which directs the grandfather and father, grandmother, mother and children of every poor, old, blind, lame and impotent person, not able to work, to be assessed to the support of every such poor person, is regularly carried into effect under the authority of 59 Geo. 3, c. 12, s. 36, without any obstacles to its enforcement. Instances of children deserted by their parents are very rare. Poor children are seldom apprenticed by the parish officers; but are bound by their parents according to their judgment and opportunities. The prohibition against binding for less than seven years creates in these parts no inconvenience, as the relations of the apprentices can enter personally into the contract for such term as may be approved and agreed upon. This reduces the restriction to a question relating merely to the expense of the stamp, which is occasionally paid by the parish; so that there does not appear to be any necessity for a legislative enactment empowering the parish to bind for less than seven years.

2. *The Able-bodied.*

The able-bodied poor while in health are never relieved at Southwell in any of the five modes specified under this head, except in No. 2, by the parish employing and paying the applicants for relief according to the labour performed. The only employment so furnished at Southwell is upon the highways, and the extent of such employment is so limited, that having made an appointment on Saturday the 25th to attend the surveyor of the highways at his pay table, I received the gratifying intimation that my attendance would prove useless, for this being harvest-time there were not any labourers receiving pay. I find that the average number of persons so employed upon the roads, including highways and turnpike roads within this parish of Southwell, was, during the year 1831, in winter, ten; in summer, five.

2. The able-bodied.

The preceding observations apply equally to the surrounding parishes, with this exception, that in a few instances, a worn-out labourer is sent from house to house for employment at such wages as are thought just, but this practice, which is by no means general, has been confined to the winter months, and no relief is at the same time granted by the parish.

The relief of the able-bodied originated at Southwell by payment of rents in the year 1785. They were first supplied with employment in the year 1819-20, for which the sum paid in that year amounted to 94 *l.* 18 *s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; in 1820-21, its amount was 292 *l.* 9 *s.* 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; it was reduced in 1821-22 to 91 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; in 1822-23, to 2 *l.* 10 *s.* 6 *d.*, and since that period no such relief has been granted.

These modes of relief are supposed to have arisen principally from the mal-administration of the poor laws, and from the contagious example of other districts, particularly in the south. Since the discontinuance of this relief, the industry, habits and character of the labourer have very considerably improved. The increase of population in and around Southwell is about one-tenth in every 10 years. The rate of wages has rather increased than diminished. The profits of farming are less than formerly, but still remunerating; farming capital is rather increasing. Improvements of land are advancing.

The diminution or discontinuance of the relief to able-bodied persons originated in an earnest endeavour of the Rev. J. T. Becher to resist an administration of the poor laws which he considers illegal and injurious, both to the relievers and the relieved, for the purpose of introducing what he styles "The Anti-pauper System." He prevailed upon the parish, in the year 1806, to erect a workhouse for Southwell, constructed upon the principles of seclusion, separation and classification. In 1811, he placed the workhouse under the provisions of the statute 50 Geo. 3, c. 50, and in the same year he arranged the system of book-keeping which since that time has been in use; and having made these previous preparations, he prevailed upon G. Nicholls, esq., now superintendent of the branch bank of England at Birmingham, to undertake the office of overseer of the poor, which he did for the years 1821-22 and 1823-24, to co-operate with Mr. P. Bausor, then and still assistant-overseer of the poor, in stemming the tide of pauperism, and in forcing upon the poor the duty of self-support. In these objects, G. Nicholls, esq. and Mr. Bausor, together with the other overseers and churchwardens, diligently, humanely and successfully dedicated their zealous exertions; and, in conducting this reformation, they received from the magistrates that cordial aid and countenance to which they were well entitled when encountering the obloquy and misrepresentation necessarily excited amongst the poor, and occasionally influencing several mistaken, though well-meaning and tender-hearted, persons in higher walks of life.

It is very particularly stated by Mr. Becher, and he wishes strongly to impress upon the minds of the Commissioners, that the melioration of the state of the poor, and the redemption of this district from the degradation of pauperism, has been wholly effected by a rigid adherence to the principles developed in the 43 Eliz., and to the laws now in existence for the management of the poor; and that in the interpretation of those laws, and in the practical application of them for the prevention, as well as for the extinction, of pauperism, he has been implicitly governed by the report upon the poor laws drawn up in 1817 by Mr. Sturges Bourne, and aided by the statute 59 Geo. 3, c. 12, which he introduced, and by the laws relating to workhouses. The change thus effected stands solely upon the legitimate administration of the poor laws, and upon the energies kindled among the working classes by infusing the principle of self-support. It has already been stated, that all children, whose parents shall not be thought able to maintain them, are schooled, victualled and employed at the workhouse during the winter season.

(A) Reports.

Major W. Wylde,
R. A.III. The persons
by whom relief is
awarded.

1. Overseers.

III.—THE PERSONS BY WHOM RELIEF IS AWARDED.

1. Overseers.

In the Southwell division, it is a standing rule with the magistrates, in the appointment of overseers, that one of the overseers last appointed shall continue in office; which operates so as to procure a service of two years from each overseer, with the annual removal of one.

Assistant-overseers are always recommended by the magistrates, and almost invariably adopted by the parishes.

In the incorporated parishes, one of the guardians is almost invariably a stipendiary officer.

The assistant-overseer frequently executes other parochial duties, such as deputy-constable and collector of taxes, which necessarily renders him more conversant in parochial business.

The assistant-overseer is sometimes paid a stipulated sum to cover all charges for trouble and expenses; in other instances, is paid an annual sum for his trouble within the parish, and a specified allowance for subsistence when absent on duty, as well as mileage.

The scale allowed by the magistrates throughout this division, and recommended by the finance committee of magistrates, in a copious report just presented for regulating the affairs of this county, is 1 s. for the first mile, and 6 d. for every additional mile travelled by any parish officer; such allowance to be computed only one way.

Mr. Becher objects to the operation of a late decision in the case of *Rex v. Inhabitants of Lew*, stated in Boswell's and Creswell's Reports, vol. 8, page 654; or in Burn's Justice, by Chitty, vol. 4, pages 15 and 644, which subjects the appointment of an assistant-overseer to a stamp of 2 l. He recommends that the title "permanent overseer" be substituted for "assistant" overseer, as the term assistant-overseer is not in popular use; neither does it appear to imply that such officer possesses a co-ordinate authority with the other overseers; an assistant does not appear to imply a principal, which the assistant-overseer actually is by virtue of his appointment, and still further by his conducting the chief executive management.

But when the poor are employed upon the roads, they are under the superintendence of the surveyor of the highways, who never acts, at the same time, as an overseer of the poor. No inconvenience arises from the separation of these offices. On the contrary, it provides additional inspectors over the poor; promotes perspicuity and accuracy in the parochial accounts; and enables the rate-payers, more particularly the inferior orders, to discern correctly, by the district officers, the purposes for which the several assessments are paid.

The assistant-overseers soon acquire a competent knowledge of the work to be performed by paupers. Moreover, to facilitate information respecting the amendment of the highways, and to produce uniformity, Mr. Bausor, the permanent overseer of Southwell, who is also the surveyor of the turnpike roads under the commissioners, is appointed by the justices, as their general surveyor, to instruct all parochial overseers of the highways willing to consult him, which they do very frequently. He surveys the whole of the roads in any parish requiring his inspection; reports upon the state of them to the magistrates; recommends such amendments or improvements as appear advisable, and, when they have been executed, reports further; certifies the state of the highways to the magistrates, so as to obtain, on behalf of such parish, a reduction of such portion of the highway rate as can be conveniently dispensed with. In this district the whole of the duty to be performed upon the highways is converted into money, being at the rate of 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound sterling, which yields, for every 50 l. assessed, 3 l. 8 s. 9 d.; so that the value of a team for one day is estimated at 11 s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., being for six days 3 l. 8 s. 9 d., as above shown to be the representative of 50 l. Under this arrangement, which originated at Southwell, and has extended itself over a great part of this county, the teams and labourers are not called out as in other counties for a certain number of days; but the duty is converted into piece-work, and the party liable is allowed to perform his team-work according to his convenience, and to work out the sum due at the rate of 1 s. per mile for every ton of materials conveyed. I have dilated particularly upon this subject, because Mr. Becher is of opinion that it is not a customary practice; and the beneficial effects of it have been considerable, increasing the fund for the employment of the poor, with manifest advantages to the community, and with a diminution of the burden imposed upon the parties liable to the reparation of the highways.

Copies of the Southwell parochial accounts, and of the incorporated workhouse, have been delivered to Mr. Cowell, who has no doubt already transmitted them.

Mr. Becher is of opinion, that a new officer should be appointed, to be denominated an auditor of accounts, for every district in which a session is held for the examination of parochial accounts; that all parochial accounts should be arranged under certain heads, and that no such accounts should be allowed by the magistrates until they had been examined and certified by such auditor; and further, that an abstract showing the expenditure under each head for every parish should be made by the auditor, one copy thereof to be delivered to the clerk of the magistrates, and one copy to be transmitted to the Commissioners of the Poor Laws, or to such other public body as shall be approved. Mr. Becher knows, from experience, that an auditor would be duly compensated by an allowance of 2 s. 6 d. for every 100 l. contained in each account, and for every fractional part of 100 l.

2. Vestries.

The vestry at Southwell and the vestries in the neighbouring district are all open. Indeed, Mr. Becher has never encouraged the appointment of select vestries, under an impression that the provision in 59 Geo. 3, c. 12, s. 2, enabling discontented paupers to apply to any justice, and empowering any two justices to control the decision of the select vestry, would soon be acted upon by the poor; and that the decision of the magistrates, if opposite to that of the select vestry, which on many occasions might be the case, would produce great dissatisfaction in the select vestry, and lead to its speedy dissolution. A select vestry was appointed for the populous parish of St. Mary's, Nottingham, but soon discontinued. At Southwell, very few of the parishioners attend the vestry, except the churchwardens and overseers, who meet on the second Tuesday in every month to audit the accounts and transact business.

Mr. Becher suggests, that as both owners and occupiers of tenements rated at 5*l.*, at the least, are entitled by the 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, s. 6, to vote at a public meeting for carrying this Act into execution, and as no objections have been raised against this practice, it would, in his judgment, prove advantageous to give owners the same power of voting in vestry which has been granted to occupiers under 59 Geo. 3, c. 85.

In Southwell and its neighbourhood, the clergy, as incumbents, interfere little, if at all in the management of the poor, as the ecclesiastical benefices round Southwell are principally perpetual curacies or small vicarages, served, as is usual in collegiate establishments, by the vicars-choral of the collegiate church in Southwell, who reside within the precincts of the minster.

Mr. Becher is decidedly of opinion, that paid persons exercising magisterial authority with respect to parochial relief, would neither acquire the confidence of the magistrates, nor of the relievers or the relieved. The county has been so much accustomed to an unpaid magistracy, that such persons would be branded with the name of hirelings and stipendiaries, so that they would find it difficult to carry their orders into effect; and, if enforced, they would occasion discontent, if not resistance; besides which, it would create a considerable expense. Mr. Becher has long had a plan, which he will detail when he reports to you, the outline of which is, that the parishes comprised in the division attending any petty sessions, may, according to their extent and number, be divided by themselves or others into districts, to be denominated visitorial districts; and that one or more visitors be appointed for every such district. That each visitor may appoint a deputy-visitor, and that the authority of such visitors shall be the same as under Gilbert's Act, 22 Geo. 3, c. 83; such visitors to have a specific qualification in property, and to be appointed by the justices in special sessions from a list of persons nominated by the churchwardens and overseers of the parishes or places situated within the visitorial district. The visitors to act without stipend.

These opinions of Mr. Becher are founded upon his experience of their admirable practical operation, as far as they have been applied to the 49 incorporated parishes for which he officiates as visitor, and William Wylde, esq., another justice of the peace for the county, as deputy-visitor.

He adds, that settlements should not be acquired, except by an unmarried person.

That the Irish and Scotch should not obtain a settlement without a residence of seven years, subject to the same restriction with regard to absence in each year.

3. Magistrates.

In the Southwell division, the magistrates consider the overseers of the poor, or the vestries, the proper distributors of parochial relief, and abstain studiously from any interference in its application, except in favour of the impotent poor, and then only on an appeal. The able-bodied poor they invariably refer to the overseers, to whom the general instruction is, that sturdy paupers, unwilling to work at regular wages, or neglecting to apply a sufficient proportion of their earnings to the support of their families, should be committed to the house of correction, as idle and disorderly persons; and that persons unable to procure work be employed on work of the most laborious description, at the expense of the parish, to be executed by the piece when practicable; but that no person relieved by the parish be at the same time employed at reduced wages by any parishioner.

IV. THE PERSONS AT WHOSE EXPENSE RELIEF IS GIVEN.

Assessment and Collection.

The assessments in these parts are generally considered as fair. When parties are dissatisfied with them, an appeal is made to the petty sessions, where, if the question is not adjusted, a recommendation is given by the justices that a competent land-valuer be appointed to decide it; and, in some cases, to make an equal rate upon the whole parish. The usual charge for making a valuation is two guineas a day. In Southwell and its district every tenement is rated, and with very good effect.

The 19th section of Mr. Sturges Bourne's Act has not been carried into effect, because it does not apply to tenements of less value than 6*l.* per annum; consequently, it is of little utility in rural districts.

Reports.
Major W. Wylde,
R. A.
2. Vestries.

3. Magistrates.

IV. The persons at
whose expense
relief is given.
Assessment and
collection.

Reports.

Major W. Wylde,

R. A.

Major W. Wylde,

R. A.

Casual paupers are not relieved to any extent, except in case of sickness. No expense is incurred for Scotch or Irish poor, except in conveying them by vagrant-passes at the expense of the county.

Settled paupers.—In these parts, and in this county, no agricultural labourers or servants obtain settlements, as the hiring is limited by the employers to 51 weeks, for the express purpose of evading a settlement; therefore, an interval of one week necessarily occurs between the conclusion of one service and the commencement of another, which time is generally spent in idleness and dissipation, and tends materially to demoralize this class of labourers and servants.

Mr. Becher's opinion with regard to the law of settlement is, that we should return to the rule prevailing under 14 Eliz., c. 5, and the preceding statutes, by which the poor are legally settled in the "place where they were born, or most conversant by the space of three years next before." Absence in each year for a certain number of days might be allowed, such number not to exceed 90 days in any one year, being the period fixed by the Act for the residence of the clergy; or probably, with more propriety, not to exceed 60 days of absence.

V. EMIGRATION.

V. Emigration.

In 1819, a voluntary subscription of about 5,000*l.* was raised in Nottinghamshire for emigration to Algoa Bay. The emigration and the application of this fund was entrusted to Mr. Becher and E. S. Godfrey, esq., clerk of the peace. Between 200 and 300 persons, consisting of artificers and labourers, were conveyed to Liverpool from Nottinghamshire, and sailed from thence to Algoa Bay in two vessels provided by Government. They are now settled in and about Bathurst Town and Graham's Town. Some few have returned; but the generality have remained, and express themselves contented. But at the time of their departure, emigration was unpopular; so that one part of the subscription was returned to the subscribers. However, the opinion of the working classes has subsequently undergone a material change in respect to emigration; so that several letters have since been addressed to Mr. Becher, requesting to be conveyed out of the kingdom as emigrants upon those conditions which had formerly been rejected. He can discern no objection to giving parishes the power of raising money for emigration, with the consent of owner and occupiers, as before mentioned under the head of Vestries; but thinks, that persons so emigrated, should lose their parochial settlement, or remain liable to reimburse the parish the expense of their emigration.

VI. ACQUISITION OF LAND BY LABOURERS.

VI. Acquisition of land by labourers.

The reduction of the rates at Southwell has been effected without any allotment of gardens to the poor. However, Mr. Becher, within the last seven years, has, with the consent of two trustees who are joined with him, divided eight acres of land devised for charitable purposes into gardens, containing not less than half a rood of ground, nor more than one rood; by which arrangement, any poor inhabitant of the township of Easthorpe, in the parish of Southwell, is enabled to rent one of such gardens, at the rate of 15*s.* per rood. No assistance is given in manuring, working or seed. Mr. Becher considers the average quantity of land which a labourer can occupy beneficially to be from twenty perches to two roods. Such is the size of the gardens in his parish, at Thurgarton, where the labourers have for many years been so accommodated, with good effects as to their welfare and conduct, and as to the amount of the rates. The ownership by small proprietors is more common than formerly, both among freeholders and copyholders.

VII. TAXATION ON DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

VII. Taxation on domestic servants.

Mr. Becher, as chairman of the commissioners of assessed taxes, informs me, that among the numerous farmers in this division, none of them are so taxed, nor does he believe taxable, although the farmers' servants commonly live in their houses; therefore, this tax cannot have affected the residence of labourers under their employers' roofs in and around these parts.

VIII. RURAL POLICE.

VIII. Rural police.

The constable's office in Southwell and its neighbourhood is generally executed by a permanent parish officer, sometimes as a principal, sometimes as a deputy. There have been no riots, disturbances or fires in the Southwell division of the county of Nottingham, nor have they been apprehended. After the tumults at Nottingham, in October 1831, Mr. Becher convened a public meeting of the inhabitants of Southwell, and with the unanimous consent of the persons so assembled, placed this parish under the provisions of Mr. Portman's Act, 11 Geo. 4, c. 27, intitled, "An Act to make provisions for the Lighting and Watching of Parishes in England and Wales." The lighting formed but a small part of the object in view, as only three lamps were provided: but the power thus acquired for the appointment and protection of watchmen has been highly useful. The printed proceedings of this meeting are transmitted. The populous parish of St. Mary's, Nottingham, and the town of Retford, in this county, held meetings, after the proceedings at Southwell, for the purpose of endeavouring to put the same Act into execution; but the proposal was negatived by the votes of the small rate-payers. The people of this district may be firmly depended upon in case of emergency.

Having now detailed the facts and opinions relating to the management of the poor in this district, I beg leave to observe, that it has been my endeavour to sift them, and to ascertain

ascertain by personal inquiry the state of the poor and the administration of the poor laws, by being present at the meetings for executing parochial duties and at the sessions of the magistrates.

I refer, however, more particularly, for the confirmation of the facts and opinions contained in this Report, to the Rev. J. T. Becher, who has for the last 28 years taken an active part as a magistrate, as well as to my relation, William Wylde, esq., who has during the same period discharged the magisterial duties in conjunction with Mr. Becher, and who has been the deputy visitor of the incorporated workhouse from its first establishment. Besides which, having been the colonel of the local militia, and being the principal in the Southwell Bank, he has opportunities of knowing correctly the temper, habits and circumstances of the people, which render his authority on such points very valuable. To these magistrates I must add, as an important authority, Mr. Paul Bausor, who has acted for 20 years as assistant-overseer of the parish of Southwell, and during that period has been a regular attendant at every sessions of the magistrates, besides being in daily communication with Mr. Becher, and holding the appointment of treasurer and secretary to the incorporated parishes.

Mr. Bausor appears to be an active, intelligent and experienced officer. In addition to the appointments enumerated, he is surveyor of the turnpike roads, secretary of the savings bank, and of the friendly and endowment societies; in all which departments the accounts appear to be kept with strict regularity. It therefore seems scarcely possible to find an overseer better acquainted with any district, than he is with Southwell and the surrounding district, to which my inquiries have in framing this Report been directed.

Deriving my information from such authorities, I have arrived at the conclusion, that the parish of Southwell and the neighbouring district has been infested with pauperism. The paupers have been insolent, overbearing, profligate and extravagant. The payment of rents by the parishes, as well as the practice of roundsmen, has prevailed, and the rates have been excessive. But these evils have all been restrained by the system introduced by Mr. Becher, which is involved in no mystery, and consists chiefly in the construction of the statute 43 Eliz., c. 12, by the magistrates in this district. In their prohibiting relief in money to able-bodied paupers, as being in their judgment illegal. In compelling the poor to accept employment without the boundaries of the parish, if within reasonable distance. In maintaining and schooling some of the children of numerous families belonging to labourers at the workhouse during the winter season. In declining any interference with the overseers, except in cases of emergency, as a court of appeal. In authorizing the parish officers to withhold relief from any pauper adjudged by them to be a fit object for the workhouse, if such pauper shall have refused to be lodged and maintained therein, subject to the discipline and the restrictions respecting visiting, fermented liquors and tobacco, before mentioned in this Report. In a word, by adopting the Report of Mr. Sturges Bourne upon the Poor Laws in 1817, together with the Acts 58 Geo. 3, c. 69, and 59 Geo. 3, c. 12, for the direction of the magistrates and the overseers of the poor in their department.

Such are the legal and moral principles, as well as the practical rules of conduct, which constitute the basis of the "anti-pauper system;" and as Southwell, with the exception of a few coarse stocking frames, is not a manufacturing town, and as the surrounding district is purely agricultural, I am unable to discern why magistrates and parochial officers, in districts similarly circumstanced, should not by the same modes of action produce the same beneficial effects.

However, in the district assigned me as Assistant-Commissioner, it shall be my endeavour to investigate minutely the mode of administering the laws by the magistrates, as well as the practical execution of them by the parish officers, so as to develop, if possible, whether the means for preventing as well as for extinguishing pauperism at Southwell, may not, without any sudden or violent change of the existing laws, be rendered available for the general good of the community.

I may enumerate the documents connected with this Report in the following order: The Anti-pauper System and the administration of the Poor Laws at Southwell, and in the neighbouring district, by the Rev. J. T. Becher, 1828. A pamphlet now out of print; probably will be re-printed.

The statement of Mr. P. Bausor, annexed.

A list of Southwell charities.

A statement of deposits in Southwell Savings Bank, from 1825 to 1832.

4th September 1832.

AT half-past eleven o'clock, A. M., visited the Incorporated Workhouse established by 49 parishes immediately surrounding the town of Southwell, from which this workhouse is one mile distant.

Present:

The Rev. John Thomas Becher, Visitor; William Wylde, esq., Deputy Visitor; Mr. Paul Bausor, Treasurer and Secretary, with 44 Guardians, being one from each of the 44 parishes or townships. Five guardians did not attend, and were fined 7 s. 6 d. each.

It was a quarterly meeting; the payment of the accounts due by each parish commenced at 11 A. M. and is completed at 12, when the names of the guardians are called over.

The visitor stated, that six parishes, which he enumerated, had reduced the amount of their expenditure for the poor, from 1,262 l., being the mediums or average annual expenditure for three years, ended at Lady-day 1823, to 797 l. for the year ended at Lady-day 1832, being a reduction of more than 36 per cent.

Several questions were then proposed to the guardians, both collectively and individually.

The questions and answers were in substance as follows:

Do you consider the workhouse to be an useful establishment for the maintenance and management of your poor?—We do, unanimously.

P. L. (A.)—II.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major W. Wylde,
R. A.

V. Emigration.

VI. Acquisition of land by labourers.

VII. Taxation on domestic servants.

VIII. Rural police.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major W. Wylde,
R. A.

Could you without a workhouse manage and regulate your poor as you now do?—We could not. When the poor are discontented we offer them an order for admission into the workhouse, and we hear no more complaint.

[Mr. Hind.] How long have you been guardian for Thurgarton?—From the first establishment of the workhouse in December 1824.

How long have you been assistant-overseer of the parish of Thurgarton?—For more than 20 years.

That parish was, I believe, supposed to be very well managed long before this workhouse was erected?—It was so considered.

It appears that your medium or average annual expenditure on account of the poor was ascertained in 1823 to be 149*l.*, according to the statement now upon the table; but you have in the last year, ended at Lady-day 1832, reduced such expenditure to 57*l.*, being a diminution of more than 61 per cent. Could you have effected this reduction without a workhouse?—Certainly not.

[Observation.] The rental of Thurgarton in 1815, assessed under the Property Tax Act, was 3,406*l.*; therefore the whole annual expenditure for the poor, including salary of assistant-overseer, medical attendance, and incidental charges, has been reduced to a rate of 4*d.* in the pound upon such rental, which is supposed to be less than the present annual value.

Mr. John Fletcher, the guardian of South Muskam voluntary states, "An old man and woman were receiving 5*s.* a week from our parish, they asked for more, which I refused, but offered them the workhouse. They then complained to the magistrates at Newark, and we were summoned; but the magistrates said they could not interfere, as I had offered them the workhouse."

The guardian of Winthorpe voluntarily stated, "A young man and his wife, married last May, came to me for lodging, or for money to provide one; I refused; the man said he must have it; but I offered to lodge him and his wife in the workhouse, which he refused; since then I have heard nothing more of him or his wife."

Mr. James Wood, guardian of Maplebeck, voluntarily stated, "Our paupers have brought us two or three times before Mr. Miles, the magistrate; but as I offered them the workhouse, he always said that he could not interfere; so they do not trouble us now in that way. If there was an easy magistrate, who would lean to the poor, I am sure that wherever he was they would find him out, and go to him. But now we have the workhouse to offer them their complaint to him would be of no use."

This guardian, Mr. Wood, was for several years principal turnkey or taskmaster at the Nottinghamshire House of Correction, in Southwell; therefore he is well acquainted both with the magistrates and the poor.

Mr. Ashling, guardian of Sutton-upon-Trent, stated, "A woman with three young children applied to me yesterday for relief; she had left her husband and another child at Mansfield. I told her that I knew he was in regular employ at the gas-works, she admitted he received 14*s.* a week in winter, but not above 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week in summer. I gave her an order of admission into the workhouse, but I think she will not go there."

[Observation.] On our return to Southwell we overtook this woman, with an infant on her back, and two small children walking by her side, going back to Mansfield. She told her story as stated by the guardian of Sutton, and added, "He would give us no relief but this," showing an order for admission into the workhouse, which she held in her hand.

[To Mr. Fogg, the Governor.] You had an able-bodied pauper in this workhouse when Mr. Cowell visited you in July last, what has become of him?—He was Isaac Cook, a tramping weaver, belonging to Eakring; we kept him here nine weeks and five days; the visitor then gave him, at his own request, an order to let him leave the house, and try to come to terms with his parish.

[To the Guardian of Eakring.] What became of this pauper?—I refused to relieve him, and we have heard nothing more of him. But we have since had another able-bodied pauper in the workhouse, between the age of 60 and 70, named John Rose. His case turned upon the duty of his son to relieve him in part. The son has agreed with the parish to make his father a weekly allowance, and the father is to earn the remainder required for his support. He has given us no further trouble.

[Observation by the Visitor.] I directed the guardian to apply to the son for reimbursement of the sums paid for maintenance of his father in the workhouse, on which application the son has repaid the parish as required.

Has there been any other able-bodied male pauper in the workhouse since July last?—Yes; one, belonging to the parish of Screveton.

[To the Guardian of Screveton.] Will you state the history of your pauper?—He was a widower, and stockinger on a coarse frame, aged about 35 years, with three young children, one of them was a sickly infant. The man lived out of the parish, and was decent and well conducted; he asked for relief sufficient to support the sick child; it was refused; he was sent to the workhouse, but went out under the visitor's authority on the 10th of last month, after having been maintained there for five weeks. We have heard nothing of him since his departure.

Have any other able-bodied male paupers been in this workhouse since Mr. Cowell visited on the 3d July 1832?—None.

[To the Governor.] What able-bodied females have you now in the workhouse?—None, except four women pregnant with bastard children, who come here to lye-in; and two women deserted by their husbands, who have come for the same purpose. We have scarcely sufficient able-bodied females to do the work of the house.

[To the Guardians.]—Do you experience any difficulty in keeping your accounts in the form prescribed for your parishes?—We do not.

[To Mr. P. Bausor.]—Besides acting as treasurer and secretary of this incorporation, you also officiate as assistant overseer of the poor of Southwell?—I have had that appointment for the last 20 years.

Have you any able-bodied paupers in Southwell workhouse?—We have none, neither male nor female.

Have you had any able-bodied paupers therein since Mr. Cowell visited Southwell?—We had a man, named Grundy, a stockinger, with his wife and three young children; he asked for relief because his trade would not support his family; we refused relief, so the whole family came into Southwell poorhouse, but did not remain there for three days; they were then discharged at their own request, and are now supporting themselves.

[To the Guardians.]—Have you in any of your parishes a select vestry?—[The Guardian of Sutton-upon-Trent.]—We have one.

Does it assist you in the management of the poor?—We think it does good; we meet and talk over matters, and plan what will be for the best; we then make proper entries in our vestry book.

[To the Guardians.]—Has any other parish a select vestry?—No.

Then you manage the parish concerns either by open vestry or by parish officers?—We do.

Do you find any difficulty in so doing?—We never find any.

Are your paupers dissatisfied with the decisions of the guardians?—We seldom have any complaints.

Have you had any agricultural riots or burnings in your parishes?—No; we have had none in any of our parishes.

Have you been often brought before the visitor in consequence of the complaints of the poor?—We do not any of us recollect having been brought before him at any time on such complaints.

Have you been often summoned before the magistrates on complaints by paupers?—Very seldom of late years; when we appear before the magistrate we tell him that ours is one of the incorporated parishes, and that we have offered the pauper maintenance in the workhouse, after which the magistrate tells the pauper he has no power to interfere.

Then the maintenance of your poor is conducted without the interposition of the magistrates, and with very few appeals from the poor to the visitor against your decisions?—Just so; as we have stated.

[Observations of the Visitor.] The statements of the guardians may be thus illustrated. When the 49 parishes were first incorporated under Gilbert's Act, 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, the statute had never been brought into operation in this district, consequently its provisions were not well understood by magistrates, by parish officers, or by paupers. Therefore at the commencement of our system the poor naturally resorted to the magistrates according to their long accustomed practice. When the guardians appeared to answer the complaint, they respectfully represented that, being an incorporated parish, they were not legally under the jurisdiction of the justices. This necessarily produced an explanation and a reference to the visitor, so that complaints during the first year after the establishment of our workhouse were not unfrequent. But, when the anti-pauper system had been progressively developed, my little pamphlet, defining its principles and its practical application was delivered to every parish. This exposition, in conjunction with the exemplifications resulting from experience, soon produced an uniformity of parochial management, and a clear comprehension of the objects in contemplation.

The conferences at the monthly meetings of the visitor and the guardians, and the statements then submitted, evinced the utility of our measures for improving the moral character, as well as the condition, of the poor; while the parochial accounts presented at the conclusion of every year, in a prescribed form of classification, enabled these parish-officers and the parishioners to appreciate precisely the effect of the system upon their local expenditure, and to show the reduction or increase occurring under each head adopted in the arrangement of the accounts.

Whenever a difference existed between the parish-officers and the poor, neither party was privileged to select the magistrate before whom the question was to be decided. But all parties were compelled either to adjust the matter or to consult the visitor, whose opinions upon the interpretation of the poor-laws and upon practical application of them were circulated in print; so that the decision, which he must unavoidably pronounce, was anticipated with certainty. While the parties were rescued from that diversity of opinion both in the construction and the administration of the poor-laws, which unhappily prevails, even in the same district, among justices of the peace.

I deem it proper to add, that from the establishment of our incorporated workhouse I have never known a single question discussed, either as to the appointment of officers, the management of the workhouse, or the system of parochial relief, on which the guardians have not testified a decided wish and endeavour to observe and enforce the measures recommended by the visitor.

Having thus endeavoured to discover what appeared, in my judgment, to be a useful and practicable standard for devising the means of distributing parochial relief, I have proceeded to ascertain, by personal observation; by conference with the magistrates, both in and out of sessions; by examining the parish officers, together with their books and accounts, as well as by inspecting their workhouses, and, occasionally, their prisons, how far the Southwell system may have been adopted in this county; or whether any better means had been elsewhere devised for improving the condition of the poor, and for restraining the progressive accumulation of parochial rates.

ST. MARY'S, NOTTINGHAM.

The mayor and aldermen constitute the magistracy; but the justices of the county of Nottingham are, by the statute 43 Geo. 3, c. 45, invested with a concurrent jurisdiction, which, in the administration of the poor laws, is rarely exercised. According to the census of 1831, this town contains 50,680 inhabitants; of whom 39,539 reside in the parish of St. Mary, 5,447 in St. Nicholas, and 5,234 in St. Peter. It will, however, suffice for the present purpose to detail the management of the poor in the parish of St. Mary, which, by its magnitude and its peculiar circumstances, is well entitled to particular attention, as exhibiting, upon a very extensive scale, the practical administration of the poor laws. Mr. Absalom Burnett has for several years acted as assistant-overseer, of which office he discharges the duties with intelligence and activity. In 1831–32, the annual salary allowed him was 200*l.*; the stipends to collector, clerks and assistants, were 315*l.* 10*s.*; and the charges for printing and stationery, with contingencies, were 86*l.* 9*s.*; amounting collectively to 601*l.* 19*s.* for this establishment. The payments for parochial relief, without including illegitimate children, were 8,631*l.* 18*s.* — $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; of which 1,966*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* was received back, principally by assignments of pensions, reducing the net amount to 6,665*l.* 8*s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* Of this relief, 1,824*l.* 1*s.* 2*d.* was expended in the employment of the poor, for which the money received

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Reports.

Major *W. Wylde*,
R. A.Fluctuations in
trade.Able-bodied
paupers.

Workhouse.

Bastardy laws.

in return was only 27*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*; therefore the net out-payment for such labour was 1,796*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.*, or nearly one-fourth of the sum disbursed for parochial relief.

In the winter of the year 1819 the fluctuations of trade involved the stocking weavers in such distress, that the system of weekly parochial allowances to able-bodied artificers and labourers became general in Nottingham and in the surrounding parishes. At this time 500 able-bodied workmen were chargeable to the parish of St. Mary, when the parishioners alarmed at the increase of this baneful practice, determined to abandon it, and substitute employment for such relief, which was effected by bringing a piece of waste land into cultivation.

Since that period pecuniary relief has been withheld from all able-bodied persons, as far as the magistrates would allow; and paupers, whether artificers or labourers, have been supplied with piece-work of the most laborious kind, such as repairing and altering highways, getting and breaking stone, repairing and cleansing water-courses, paving, and spade husbandry; which change of system has been pursued for 12 years with manifest advantage both to the poor and to the parish, by suspending the necessity of applications to the magistrates for parochial relief, and by rendering such appeals, when vexatiously made, unavailing.

The number of cases, exclusive of bastards, relieved out of the workhouse during one week in the last summer was 786, comprising about 1,100 individuals.

The number of paupers in the workhouse during the same period was 387, which may be thus enumerated: 140 men, 107 women, 90 boys and 50 girls. The ages of the adults varied from 18 to 88 years. The males and females are not separated during the day-time; neither does the construction of this poor-house afford the means of proper classification. Employment is not contemplated; so that this poor-house, like many similar establishments in populous towns, may be considered merely as a refuge for the destitute.

The administration of the bastardy laws in this parish is well entitled to attention; since it exemplifies, upon a very extensive scale, the practice established at Southwell, and in such of the surrounding parishes as Mr. Becher can influence by his advice, in recommending the parochial officers to abstain from any proceeding against the putative father until after the birth of the child. Of this I witnessed instances while present at the Southwell petty sessions, on which I have forbore to dilate in my former Report upon the Southwell district, under a hope that I might be enabled to confirm the representations of Mr. Becher by the statements of Mr. Barnett, which I am now fully enabled to do from the bastardy register of St. Mary's, Nottingham, out of which I shall extract the particulars relating to the year ended at Lady-day 1820, being the first year for which the records have been given, and the year ended at Lady-day 1832, being the last. During the former period it was customary for the females to filiate before birth, after which a warrant was issued to apprehend the putative father, and the orders of filiation and maintenance were invariably made at the quarter sessions. During the latter period the greatest part of the orders of filiation have been made, on giving notice to the putative father, after birth.

	1819-20.	1831-32.
Records of illegitimate births - - - -	76	55
Recognizance to sessions, but no filiation - -	12	1
Imprisonment for want of bail, but no filiation -	19	6
Absconded, or otherwise missing - - - -	22	12
Filiations, or other security - - - -	23	42
Imprisoned before the order - - - -	6	1
Imprisoned after the order - - - -	3	2
Marriages - - - -	13	1
Number of children chargeable out of workhouse -	190	154
	<i>£.</i> <i>s.</i>	<i>£.</i> <i>s.</i>
Sum expended in maintenance - - - -	953 14	739 5
Received back - - - -	668 11	447 19
Total cost of maintenance to the parish - -	285 3	291 6
Expense of filiation - - - -	* 24 12	* 27 16
Received back - - - -	—	—
Total cost in order to filiate - - - -	* 24 12	* 27 16

These comparative statements exhibit several singular and valuable facts, especially when we consider that the population of St. Mary's has increased from 32,712 to 39,539 in 1831, being an addition of 20 per cent. The parishes of St. Nicholas and St. Peter do not present any circumstances strictly demanding attention; therefore I shall now proceed to report upon the county of Nottingham.

County Magistrates'
petty sessions.

The county magistrates hold their petty sessions twice in every week, at the shire-hall in Nottingham. The parishes in their division are partly agricultural, and partly manufacturing; but the generality of them may be regarded as influenced by manufactures. I attended the petty sessions, and learned from the magistrates that they were acquainted with

* In this sum the fees to justices' clerks and to attornies are not included.

with the Southwell system. Some of them acknowledged that Mr. Becher's interpretation and administration of the poor laws was correct and beneficial, but that the practice of granting relief to persons partially employed had so long prevailed, that they found it difficult to discontinue what they could not altogether approve; therefore relief is granted at this petty sessions to able-bodied paupers, as well as to persons supplied with a limited portion of work by the manufacturers of stockings and lace. This, it is evident, enables the manufacturer to work up his articles by drawing a portion of the workmen's wages from the parish rate, which is still more injurious to the farmer than the payments out of the parish rates for agricultural labour, and tends, by an artificial derangement of the balance between demand and supply, to encourage over-production; besides which, machinery in this county is rented by a weekly payment to the owner of the frame, who, being generally a manufacturer, obtains thus an exorbitant advantage by continuing to let his frames at the ordinary rent, while the number of days during which they are employed is reduced occasionally to three-fourths, and sometimes to half of the regular work. This injurious practice prevailed until lately in letting the looms at Norwich, but has now been rectified by apportioning the rent of the loom according to the time of its actual employment.

The customary rate of allowance at this petty sessions is 2 s. 6 d. per week for adults, and 1 s. 3 d. for children, when totally out of employ; when in work, a proportionate allowance is given to make up the income of the family to this rate. Allowances.

In the district assigned to the Nottingham petty sessions three workhouses have been established, one in the parish of Gedling, on the south side of the road leading from Nottingham to Southwell; another at Ruddington, four miles south of Nottingham; and a third at Basford, two miles and a half south-west of Nottingham. Workhouses.

The Gedling workhouse was established in the year 1787, under the statute 9 Geo. 1, c. 7, by six adjoining parishes. These are still regarded as the proprietors; and they admit, on stipulated terms, the poor of 33 additional parishes situated in Nottinghamshire, and one in Leicestershire. Two of these are at a greater distance than ten miles from this poor-house, therefore such parishes are, by the Act 56 Geo. 3, c. 129, prohibited from becoming contributors thereto. The buildings are constructed without the means of proper separation; consequently the poor are intermingled without regard to the personal comfort of the guiltless, the punishment of the sturdy, or the moral improvement of the young. The number of paupers now in the house is 53. Gedling Workhouse.

Male adults	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Female adults	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
Males under the age of seven years	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Females under the age of 15 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
							53

Among the adult paupers were found one able-bodied male, and several such females. This man, a printer by trade, and belonging to the parish of Sneinton, had been in this house for eight months, which does not indicate in the discipline any preventive check to restrain sturdy pauperism.

The quantity of land attached to the workhouse is eight acres two roods, of which one acre and a half is occupied as a garden, the remaining seven acres are in pasture, upon which four cows are kept for the house.

The weekly charge for maintenance is as follows:—

For the six original Parishes;

	s.	d.
Adults	2	3
Children under seven years of age	1	3

For the 33 Parishes subsequently united;

Adults	2	9
Children, under seven years of age	1	4 ½

No employment is provided. No chaplain is appointed; but the rector of Gedling reads prayers and explains the Scriptures every Wednesday. The male paupers attend church on Sunday at Gedling; but the females never hear divine service, except when the governor reads prayers, which he does on a Wednesday. The house is under the management of a committee, consisting of five neighbouring gentlemen, under whose superintendence the payments required from the several parishes are regulated; after which the sums due are paid by the overseers of the poor respectively, according to their convenience, without imposing upon them the duty of inspecting from time to time the state of the workhouse and the treatment experienced by their paupers, except once a year, when a general meeting is held by the parish officers.

It remains with the Commissioners to decide whether such a system for the maintenance of the poor ought to be tolerated by the Legislature, and whether the provisions contained in the Act 9 Geo. 1, c. 7, under which this and other workhouses have been established, either for single or united parishes, ought not to be altered by the Legislature, so as to prescribe more salutary regulations for the management and superintendence

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major W. Wylde,
R. A.Ruddington
Workhouse.

tendence of the poor. These observations will apply to other workhouses established under the statute; upon which, in the discharge of my duty, I shall progressively report.

At *Ruddington*, the house of industry was originated in the year 1805, under the statute of 9 Geo. 1, c. 7, by two parishes, but at the present time it enumerates 13 parishes, of which 11 are in Nottinghamshire and two in Leicestershire. Plumtree, in Nottinghamshire, was formerly united with this house, but has withdrawn and attached itself to the Basford incorporated workhouse. The rules contained in the schedule to the Act 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, are adopted. The house and premises, together with a garden, containing half an acre, are rented for the sum of 44 *l.* a year. The house will accommodate 60 or 70 paupers. The monthly cost of the establishment, including salaries, utensils, rates and repairs, averages 7 *l.* 12 *s.* 1 *d.* monthly. The son of the matron officiates as governor, and the house is superintended by a committee of 10 persons resident in the parish, who meet monthly to audit the accounts and to examine the paupers. The overseers of the associated parishes attend once a year, or on special occasions, when summoned by the committee. The dietary of the house allows meat twice a week, and beer daily. The average cost of maintenance is 2 *s.* 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per head weekly, including the governor and matron's subsistence; men, women and children are all charged at the same rate. Apparel is provided by the parishes to which the paupers respectively belong. The present number of paupers in the house is 17, viz. 11 old men, two women and four children, of which three are bastards. The rector, the Rev. T. Selwyn, attends the house gratuitously once a week, on which occasion he explains the Scripture and reads prayers. The paupers attend church every Sunday; the children go to the Sunday-school, and are instructed on the other days of the week by the matron. Such paupers as are capable of work are employed; the men at their trades, when practicable. Agricultural labourers are sent to their parishes in the day-time, if within a moderate distance. Women and children are sometimes occupied in figuring lace. Such was the information given me; but I found none employed. A stockinger, with his wife and six children, has remained at this house for upwards of 12 months, in consequence of the refusal, on the part of his parish, to pay his rent. This seems to indicate that the discipline is not sufficiently strict. Tobacco and smoking is tolerated. The house is clean. The surgeon receives a salary of 5 *l.* 5 *s.* per annum for attendance and medicines. The workhouse is clean, but not well ventilated; it is found useful for the infirm poor, for idiots and for casual paupers; but more particularly for preventing imposition by paupers, and for restraining applications to the magistrates under false pretences.

Manufacturing
district.

In proceeding from Nottingham to Mansfield the turnpike-road passes through the densely peopled hundred of Broxtow, in which the working classes are chiefly employed in weaving silk and cotton stockings, or in the manufacture of lace with machinery. When trade was brisk females frequently worked in the stocking-frames, but at present their principal employment is seaming stockings or embroidering lace. The wages for stocking-making, or, as it is termed, frame-work knitting, are low, not exceeding 8 *s.* weekly, clear of frame-rent and customary deductions, for the labour of 12 hours. The earnings of the women and children add some little to this sum; but the total weekly amount affords but a slender subsistence to an artificer with a wife and family; consequently the working classes in this district are, by any suspension of the staple manufactures, subjected to distressful privations.

Basford Workhouse.

At *Basford* a workhouse was established in the year 1815 by 24 parishes in this district, incorporated under the 22 Geo. 3, c. 83. The cost of the building, with six acres of land, was 8,500 *l.* But 16 additional parishes have subsequently been permitted to associate, on payment of a premium according to the medium of the parochial expenditure in the parish so united. Such contributions, together with the produce of the articles sold, have in the whole amounted to 4,580 *l.*, which sum has been apportioned in rateable shares among the incorporated parishes. This mode of extending the original incorporation Mr. Becher has long since declared to be illegal, and he has submitted to my inspection the opinion of Mr. James upon this point in the year 1824, which quite coincides with Mr. Becher's construction of the Act 22 Geo. 3, c. 83. However, this workhouse now enumerates 40 parishes, of which 36 are situated in Nottinghamshire, and the remaining four in Derbyshire.

The object of this workhouse differs essentially from that which is contemplated at Southwell and in the adjoining workhouse for Thurgarton hundred. The principle of Mr. Becher's system is, to establish in the workhouse under his superintendence a system of discipline, classification, seclusion, and cleanliness, accompanied with religious instruction; to prohibit the use of fermented liquors or tobacco; to render them fit receptacles for the helpless poor, but irksome abodes to the able-bodied; and to supply labour of the most servile kind, such as digging or stone-breaking, so as to render the condition of the sturdy or able-bodied paupers irksome, without reference to profit. By these privations, the workhouse becomes a terror to the idle or dissolute; but it is a comfortable asylum for the friendless poor, who, by mental or bodily infirmity, by the helplessness of youth to the decrepitude of old age, are incapacitated from providing for themselves, and are without relations to undertake the charge of them. Therefore persons of this description constitute the sole inmates of the Southwell and the Thurgarton hundred workhouse, with the exception of a refractory pauper sent occasionally to such receptacles in consequence of a conflict with the parish officers, which is soon ended by his submission and by his application to be discharged.

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Reports.

Major W. Wylde,
R. A.System of
employment.

At Basford, however, they do not profess to receive the old or decrepid, unless it be the wish of the pauper applying for relief. In fact, the admission of able-bodied paupers seems to be the rule at Basford workhouse, and the exception at Southwell. The stocking manufactory was formerly carried on in this house, but has, for some time, been discontinued; therefore the frames are now standing idle. It has been found more profitable and eligible to substitute spade labour for manufactures, which has been effected by converting into garden ground the land originally belonging to the house, consisting of six acres, and by renting eighteen acres adjoining. The paupers are employed in cultivating these twenty-four acres, for which the soil is well adapted, while the vicinity of Nottingham affords at all times a convenient and certain market for the produce. Thus the governor is converted into a market gardener and salesman. His presence is frequently and necessarily withdrawn from the Basford establishment to dispose of his vegetables; and the superintendence of this extensive establishment, as well as the enforcement of regular discipline, is unavoidably superseded by this traffic. Besides which, it involves the governor in pecuniary transactions of such a nature, as almost to preclude the necessary checks upon his receipts and payments. At Nottingham it is represented that the governor having thus become a market gardener, furnished with capital by the associated parishes, and with labour by the paupers, interferes with the fair profits of persons raising vegetables for sale at Nottingham. The produce of the garden for one week in last October was sold in Nottingham market for 22*l.* 3*s.* 9*d.* One hundred tons of stone are kept on the premises to be broken, when the weather will not permit labour in the garden. The males and females are separated during the day; but married persons sleep together. However, there is only one day-room for males, and one for females; consequently this house does not afford the means of separating the guiltless poor from sturdy or profligate paupers. A room is appropriated as a school for children. The weekly charge for maintenance is 3*s.* 4*d.* for men, 2*s.* 4*d.* for women, and 1*s.* 4*d.* for children under 10 years of age, not including infants at the breast. The apartments are all clean, and well ventilated; and the governor states, that sturdy paupers, finding the system irksome, seldom remain long, but apply for their discharge sometimes within twenty-four hours after their admission. Smoking is allowed to the old, and beer is brewed in the house.

The paupers are prohibited leaving the house, except at Christmas and Whitsuntide, when liberty for a few days is granted to visit their friends, who frequently visit the paupers at the workhouse. The cost of the establishment is apportioned among the associated parishes according to their mediums, computed on the principle laid down in Gilbert's Act, 22 Geo. 3, c. 84. The rules contained in the schedule to this Act are adopted. This house will accommodate paupers. The public opinion concerning the utility of this workhouse may be collected from the addition of 16 parishes to the 24 originally incorporated, as well as from the sums paid for the privilege of becoming united. Sutton-in-Ashfield paid the sum of 1,200*l.* for its union; and, it is said, acknowledges the great utility of the house. The parish of Hucknall paid 600*l.* for the same purpose; and, as I am told, affirmed that this sum was saved in the first two years. All the associated parishes speak favourably of the advantages derived from this workhouse. The population of the incorporated parishes I find by the census of 1831 to be 78,196, and the rental of the real property, taken from the returns in 1815, is 121,713*l.*

The surgeon receives an annual salary for medical attendance and medicines; and a chaplain performs divine service on every Sunday, for which duties he receives a fixed stipend.

At the distance of four miles from Nottingham, on the Mansfield road, is the village of Red Hill. Red Hill, at which place the meetings of the committee were held in order to distribute the subscription collected throughout the county in 1817 for relieving the pauperized parishes in this district. As I shall hereafter advert to their proceedings, this observation may for the present suffice.

In travelling from Red Hill to Mansfield nothing requiring remark occurs.

Mansfield, with the exception of Newark, being next in size and population to Nottingham, has occupied a considerable portion of my attention; and as I professed in a former Report that I had adopted the "anti-pauper system" established by Mr. Becher at Southwell as my standard, until a more efficient guide could be found, I shall now illustrate the operation of this system, by exhibiting in a comparative statement the management of the poor at Mansfield with the administration of the poor laws at Southwell.

Mansfield.

1. Mansfield is a market town, surrounded by about 4,550 acres of land, partly limestone and partly sand, not of a very fertile quality, and partly barren forest.

2. The annual value of the real property assessed under the Property Tax Act in April 1815 was 13,326*l.*

P. L. (A.)—II.

Southwell.

1. Southwell is a market town, surrounded by about 4,500 acres of land, of which nearly one-third part is pasture or meadow, the rest arable. The soil consists of a strong, tenacious, and unproductive clay; 90 acres are occupied as hop ground.

2. The annual value of the real property assessed under the Property Tax Act in 1815 was 10,462*l.*

3. The

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3. The annual value, estimated in 1824, under the provisions of the local Act passed in 1823, intituled, "An Act for the Improving, Paving, Lighting, Cleansing and Watching the Town of Mansfield," was 12,058 *l.* 10 *s.* 6 *d.*

4. The population in 1801 was 5,998; in 1811, 6,816; in 1821, 7,861; and in 1831, 9,426. The increase of population from 1801 to 1811 was 15½ per cent., from 1811 to 1821 was 15 per cent., and from 1821 to 1831 it was 20 per cent.

5. The book-keeping of the parish of Mansfield is neither regular nor systematic; therefore I have been compelled, in prosecuting this comparison, to dissect their accounts with very considerable labour, so as to reduce into appropriate heads the expenditure under each denomination. However, I feel bound to acknowledge the willingness of the parish officers to offer me every information in their power, and I stand on this occasion particularly indebted to Mr. Collinson, bookseller, the late, and to Mr. Gething, the present, overseer for this parish, who, since my first visit to Mansfield, have voluntarily undertaken a journey to Southwell to examine the book-keeping and management of the poor adopted there, as well as at the incorporated workhouse, with which they expressed themselves well satisfied, and professed their intention of introducing similar arrangements at Mansfield, as far as circumstances will allow.

not so united. From the guardians of all such associated parishes I have ascertained their unanimous opinion, that this mode of book-keeping has been introduced without the slightest difficulty, and has been found highly useful, by enabling them to determine, with an accuracy before unattainable, not only the general receipts and payments by each parish, but the increase or decrease under every head of expenditure. Copies of the account books for the parish of Southwell, as well as for the Thurgarton hundred incorporation, and transcripts of the register of the paupers are in the hands of the Commissioners.

6. The Mansfield assessments are made at the rate of 1 *s.* 3 *d.* in the pound, yielding 753 *l.* each.

7. The amount of rates levied in 1831-32, for all parochial purposes, was 4,521 *l.*

Assessments for unoccupied premises not collected, £.*

8. Assessment not recoverable, 619 *l.*

9. Amount of rates actually collected in 1831-32 was 3,902 *l.*

The deficiency of 619 *l.* arises from assessments discharged, on account of the inability or poverty of the persons rated, from composition in lieu of rates, empty houses, and from arrears.

10. The land is rated at three-fourths of its annual value. The houses are rated at two-thirds of their annual value, according to the valuation made in 1824.

3. The full annual value estimated in 1810, was 9,681 *l.*

4. The population in 1801 was 2,305; in 1811, 2,674; in 1821, 3,051; in 1831, 3,384. The increase in population from 1801 to 1811 was 16 per cent.; from 1811 to 1821 was 14 per cent.; from 1821 to 1831 was 10 per cent.

5. The book-keeping for the parish of Southwell conforms strictly to the system prescribed by the Rev. J. T. Becher in the year 1811. Its arrangement is perfectly simple and satisfactory. The principal heads of classification will appear in the subsequent statement relating to Southwell. It affords, immediately on inspection, every information that can be required respecting the pecuniary expenditure, the number of paupers in the workhouse and out of the workhouse, their ability to work, the amount of their earnings, and their character and conduct; so that this system appears to embrace all that can be desired for such purposes. Besides which, it possesses the recommendation of having proved practically sufficient during an experience of 21 years, and of having been found equally available in the surrounding parishes, as it has been adopted in the 49 incorporated parishes, situated principally in the hundred of Thurgarton, as well as by several parishes

6. The Southwell assessments are made at the rate of 5 *d.* in the pound, yielding 204 *l.* 10 *s.* each; consequently a 1 *s.* 3 *d.* rate will produce 613 *l.* 10 *s.*

7. The amount of rates levied in 1831-32, for all parochial purposes, was 819 *l.* 5 *s.* 6½ *d.*

Assessments for unoccupied premises not collected, 3 *l.* 8 *s.* 4½ *d.*

8. Assessments not recoverable, *l.*

9. No deficiency arises from the power of discharging assessments on account of the inability or poverty of the persons rated under the provisions of the Act 54 Geo. 3, c. 170, s. 11, because all parishioners, however poor, are rated and required to pay the assessments, with the exception of seven cottages belonging to the parish, occupied by poor widows, and not rated.

10. The land is rated at 19 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound, and houses or buildings at 13 *s.*, being three-fourths of the annual value of land, and two-thirds of the annual value of houses, after deducting, as above shown, 6 *d.* in the pound from the full annual value to facilitate these proportions. A small addition is made to the assessment of houses or premises used for carrying on an extensive wholesale or retail business.

11. The

* These could not be ascertained.

11. The annual value of land assessed is *
12. The annual value of houses assessed is *
13. An assessment of 1 s. 3 d. upon land produces *
14. An assessment of 1 s. 3 d. upon houses produces *
15. The amount of expenditure for the poor in 1820-21 was 3,746 l.
16. The actual expenditure for the poor in 1831-32 has been 2,643 l. for maintenance and relief, and 1,065 l. for salaries of officers and all incidental charges, amounting in the whole to 3,688 l.
17. The donations to the poor arising from parochial charities amount annually to 1,015 l.
18. The parochial charities for the education of the poor amount to 250 l., leaving 765 l. available for benefactions to the poor.

11. The annual value of land assessed is 6,767 l.
12. The annual value of houses assessed is 3,049 l.
13. An assessment of 5 d. upon land produces 140 l. 19 s.
14. An assessment of 5 d. upon houses produces 63 l. 11 s.
15. The amount of expenditure for the poor in 1820-21 was 1,671 l.
16. The actual expenditure for the poor, 1830-31, has been 435 l. for maintenance and relief, and 166 l. for salaries of officers and all incidental charges, amounting in the whole to 601 l.
17. The donations to the poor arising from parochial charities amount annually to 154 l. 1 s.
18. The parochial charities for the education of the poor amount to 59 l. 15 s., leaving 94 l. 6 s. available for the benefactions to the poor.

Mr. Becher, as trustee of one of the parochial charities, has, with his co-trustees, apportioned seven acres in gardens for the working classes, each garden not being less than half a rood.

The parish occupies six acres.

Having now stated such particulars as seem best adapted to illustrate the subject under consideration, I shall proceed to exhibit a comparison between the expenditure for the poor in the parishes of Southwell and Mansfield respectively ; and assuming the principle of demonstration adopted by Mr. Becher in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Lords, I shall take the classification of the Southwell accounts, and will accompany each sum with its relative proportional to the correspondent entry in the parochial account with which the comparison is instituted, taking population as the basis.

EXPENDITURE of the Parish of *Mansfield*, for the Year ended at Lady-day 1832.

Cols. 1 and 2 show the actual expenditure.
Cols. 3 and 4 show the actual expenditure reduced in the proportion of the population of Mansfield, in the year 1831, to the population of Southwell, being as 9,426 to 3,384.

	1.	2.	3.	4.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
Workhouse account - -	823	823	295	295
Resident permanent paupers	799		286	
Resident occasional paupers	445		143	
Non-resident permanent paupers - - - -	357		128	
Non-resident occasional paupers - - - -	63	1,820	22	635
Bastards - - - -	156		56	
Lunatics - - - -	77		27	
Medical assistance, attendance and medicines -	67		24	
Apparel - - - -	33	1,025	11	323
Funerals - - - -	45		12	
Employment - - - -	167		23	
Rents - - - -	197		70	
Incidental charges - -	121	3,668	43	1,253
Repairs - - - -	22		7	
Salaries - - - -	123		44	
Law charges - - - -	173		62	

EXPENDITURE of the Parish of *Southwell*, for the Year ended at Lady-day 1832.

Cols. 1 and 2 show the actual expenditure.
Cols. 3 and 4 show the actual expenditure increased in the proportion of the population of Southwell, in the year 1831, to the population of Mansfield, being as 3,384 to 9,426.

	1.	2.	3.	4.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
Workhouse account - -	165	165	459	459
Resident permanent paupers	182		507	
Resident occasional paupers	16		44	
Non-resident permanent paupers - - - -	40		111	
Non-resident occasional paupers - - - -	11	270	30	750
Bastards - - - -	21		58	
Lunatics - - - -	23		64	
Medical assistance, attendance and medicines -	30		83	
Apparel - - - -	4	166	4	454
Funerals - - - -	12		33	
Employment - - - -	—		—	
Rents - - - -	—		—	
Incidental charges - -	32	601	89	1,663
Repairs - - - -	—		—	
Salaries - - - -	56		156	
Law charges - - - -	9		25	

* These could not be ascertained.

Appendix (A.)

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R. A.

Bassetlaw.

Worksop.

Worksop
Workhouse.

The parish of Sutton-in-Ashfield adjoins Mansfield on the south-west, and the parish of Mansfield-Woodhouse bounds it on the north. In the progress of my Report, I shall comment upon the management of these parishes by placing them in comparison, but will suspend such remarks till I treat of workhouses.

Having passed through Mansfield-Woodhouse, we enter *Bassetlaw* hundred, forming a separate division of this county, for which a quarter sessions is held by adjournment at Retford. On the road to Worksop, at the distance of six miles from Mansfield, you arrive at a tract of country denominated the Dukeries, which is principally occupied with parks, plantations and woods. Through these you enter the town of Worksop.

The annual value of the parish of *Worksop* in 1815 was 16,092 *l.*; its population in 1831 was 5,566; and its expenditure for the poor in 1829, 2,452 *l.* This parish was placed under the management of a select vestry in the years 1826 and 1827; but the select vestry was last year discontinued, as the inhabitants were of opinion that it was prejudicial to the interests of the parish, by interfering with the conduct of the assistant-overseer in the discharge of his duty, and by issuing orders which frequently proved capricious and inconsistent. Mr. R. Potter now officiates as assistant-overseer and manager of the workhouse, with a salary of 50 *l.* a year. Relief out of the workhouse is given to the sick, if they bring a medical certificate, at the rate of 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per head for adults of either sex, and of 1 *s.* 4 *d.* per head for children under the age of nine years. When an able-bodied pauper applies for relief, the overseers are required by the magistrates to supply them either with work or maintenance; therefore a considerable portion of the assistant-overseer's time is occupied in endeavouring to find employment for the poor. The practice of paying wages out of the rates, or of roundsmen, has never been introduced; but the persons employed by the parish are set to work on the roads, for which the pauper is paid 1 *s.* or 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a day, according to his ability. Single men, working for the parish, are allowed only 3 *s.* per week. If no employment can be found, they receive a parochial weekly allowance, in the proportions above specified. This parish possesses a workhouse, which is subject to all the objections generally attaching to such parochial establishments. There is no classification, no discipline, no education. The quantity of land attached to the house is only one rood. Beer and tobacco are allowed. The average number of paupers in the house during the last year was 42. They have no means for employing the inmates of the house, except by sending them occasionally to work on the highways, for which a part of their wages is allowed them. The governor acknowledges the defects of this system, and the officers, as well as the parishioners, profess a wish to introduce a more efficient administration of the poor laws. With this view, Mr. John Kirkham, who officiated as the governor of the Thurgarton hundred workhouse, and his wife, who acted as matron, were tempted by an increased salary to quit their situation and undertake the charge of the workhouse at Worksop, as well as the regulation of the parochial concerns. Having thus obtained as assistant overseer and governor of the workhouse a person who had been well trained under Mr. Becher, the parishioners imagined that with such an auxiliary, and with a correct system of book-keeping, the concerns of the parish might be placed under better management. However, the inefficacy of such measures, unless accompanied with judicious and vigilant superintendence, was soon exhibited, as the account-books were neglected, and remain at present in an imperfect state; and Mr. Kirkham's pecuniary transactions not being satisfactory to the parish, both he and his wife were removed from their situations; so that this experiment, instead of proving beneficial to the parish, terminated with very considerable loss.

The expediency of an improved system for managing the poor has thus been attempted, and the advantages that were likely to result from it have been universally acknowledged; but the parish officers admit that the workhouse is incapable of being rendered suitable for the purposes of such an establishment, and an impression prevails, that if the workhouse were offered the paupers as a mode of relief, it would be filled immediately; without reflecting, that such an inclination for admission arises from the total want of discipline pervading houses of this description.

Worksop compared
with Ollerton.

To exemplify the difference between good and bad management, we may compare Worksop with the market town of Ollerton, which is situated nine miles to the south-east of it.

	Population in 1831.	Expenditure for Poor, Lady-day 1832.	Expenditure per head, computed on the Population.
Worksop - - - -	5,566	£. s. d. 3,280 - -	s. d. 11 9 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ollerton - - - -	658	216 10 -	6 6 $\frac{3}{4}$

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Worksop and Ollerton are both market towns. Worksop possesses the advantage of a considerable corn market, a canal, and an extensive sale of coal, with a population much more opulent than Ollerton. Ollerton has few advantages either from its market or its trade; but Ollerton is one of the townships incorporated with the Thurgarton hundred workhouse, and conforming to the "anti-pauper system." The proportionate charge for the maintenance of the poor per head, estimated upon the population, has been above shown to be 6s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. at Ollerton, whereas at Worksop it is 11s. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; to which it may further be added, that the expenditure for the poor has increased in this progression: At Worksop, in 1825, 1,825 l.; in 1826, 1,727 l.; in 1828, 2,639 l.; in 1829, 2,452 l.; whereas the medium expenditure, taken on an average of the years 1821, 1822, 1823, for the parish of Ollerton, was 225 l.; and in 1831-32, was only 216 l. The increase of population from 1821 to 1831 has been, at Worksop, from 4,567 to 5,566, being 21 per cent.; and at Ollerton, from 567 to 658, being 14 per cent.

Whenever the parish officers tender the workhouse to a pauper, the magistrates decline making an order of relief.

Apprentices are never put out by the parish.

Mothers of illegitimate children are very seldom committed to prison.

From Worksop, I continued my inquiries until I reached *Blyth*, at the northern extremity of this county. *Blyth* is a market town, though so little frequented as scarcely to deserve that title. There is a workhouse here for eight associated parishes. The poor are maintained under a contract with the governor, who receives 3s. a head for every pauper above the age of one year, and 1s. 6d. for every pauper under the age of one year and above the age of one month. The number of inmates at present is only 16; namely, 6 aged men, 8 old women, 1 female with a bastard child, and 1 girl, aged 11 years. The numbers have sometimes amounted to 30; but 20 may be taken as the general average. There is no separation of the sexes; no employment in the house; in fact, no restraint of any kind. Beer and tobacco are not allowed; but, if the paupers can procure them, they are not prevented. So that the poor-house at *Blyth* may be considered as a mere lodging and boarding-house, where the poor appear to be sufficiently fed and humanely treated, although the system of farming the poor can never be recommended for national adoption.

Blyth.

Workhouse.

Blyth being the northern extremity of this county, I have directed my course hence along the eastern side towards the south, in which district several parishes, hereafter to be enumerated, have been tainted with the allowance system; some have emerged from it either partially or wholly; others remain still subject to it; and others, by the intelligence or activity of the parishioners, have been entirely preserved from the evils of this system.

On reaching the borough town of *East Retford*, it appears that, in 1817, a workhouse was erected, with which 28 parishes have associated, under the statute 9 Geo. 1, c. 7. The present inmates are 46 in number, and are chiefly employed in cultivating the garden, which contains 3 roods, 11 perches. The persons so employed receive 3d. per day and beer for their labour. The weekly charge for maintenance is 2s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a head for each pauper above the age of one year. A separate demand is made for apparel. The men are allowed to go out of the house for two hours in the morning, and for the same time in the afternoon, as a general privilege. The women are not allowed to absent themselves without the permission of the governor. Tobacco and smoking are allowed. It frequently happens that the men, while absent, obtain beer and spirits, so that they return occasionally in a state of drunkenness, for which they are punished. The dietary provides meat three times a week, and is sufficient. Able-bodied paupers are sometimes sent to the workhouse when the parish officers have no work to offer them, and are hired out to such as will employ them, at 1s. per day, of which 3d. is given to the pauper. However, applications for employment are not very numerous, since the means of occupation are tolerably abundant. When both employment and relief are refused the paupers apply to the magistrates, who, as it is affirmed, too frequently compel the overseer to grant relief. Women with bastard children are often sent to this house; one female has come in six or seven times. On such occasions punishment for this offence is not often enforced.

East Retford
Workhouse.Able-bodied
paupers.

A select vestry was appointed about three years since; but so much favouritism, and such little discrimination was shown, in granting relief, that considerable discontent was excited, and the parish was subjected to heavier expenses than before for the maintenance of the poor. Therefore the select vestry, being disapproved by all parties, was accordingly discontinued.

Select Vestry.

The parish, though a market town, is without an assistant-overseer.

The inhabitants have been corrupted by the system of bribery which formerly prevailed in this borough at Parliamentary elections, as every voter willing to accept on such occasions a bribe of 40 l. was enabled so to do before the disfranchisement of this borough.

The parish of *Clareborough* adjoins *East Retford*. In fact, the town of *Clareborough* is a continuation of *East Retford*, and may be said to constitute the suburbs of that borough, being the place wherein the labourers and the inferior classes of workmen employed at *Retford* principally reside. In January 1831 the state of the poor in the hamlets of *Moor-gate* and *Spittle-hill*, being parts of *Clareborough*, was ascertained by the Rev. J. W. Brookes, vicar of *Clareborough*, and others, when it was found that in these hamlets 184 families, containing 926 persons, were resident under circumstances requiring parochial relief.

Clareborough.

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relief. As the population of Clareborough in 1831 was 2,106, this statement indicates that one-half of the inhabitants were in a state of pauperism. However, it does not necessarily follow that, in reply to inquiries of this nature, the labouring classes may not have reduced the amount of their resources and increased the measure of their distress by fictitious representations, for the purpose of exciting commiseration; but, after making all such allowances, we must admit the pauperism there existing to have been very considerable. Yet we do not discern a proportionate increase of the poor-rates; for the rental of this parish, under the Property Tax Act in 1815, was 6,505*l.*; whereas the poor-rates in 1831-32, amounts to 260*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*, being only about 9½*d.* in the pound upon the rack-rent.

Workhouse.

The principal instrument for keeping down the rates is an associated workhouse, established under the 9 Geo. 1, c. 7, by Clareborough, in conjunction with 16 other parishes. Of the number so associated, 14 parishes are situated in Nottinghamshire and three in Yorkshire. This workhouse operates in preventing the applications for relief, by the dread of durance within its walls. Justly indeed may it excite such apprehension, for the house and its management present nothing to be commended, and much to be condemned. The house is a wretched building, quite unsuitable for the purpose to which it is appropriated. The apartments are extremely dirty, and badly ventilated. Only one rood of land, which is occupied as a garden, is attached to the house. The dietary, however, is not objectionable, as it provides meat three times a week, with other suitable food in proper quantities. The cost of maintenance is 3*s.* a week for adults, and 2*s.* 3*d.* for children of all ages, if in the house without their parents; but if they are with their parents an abatement of 3*d.* weekly is made for each child above two in number. Apparel is purchased by the governor and charged to the pauper for whom it is procured. Every parish except Clareborough pays 4*l.* 10*s.* annually towards the rent of the house, which belongs to Clareborough, and 15*s.* to defray the expense of the overseers' dinner at their meetings, which are held three times a year, to audit the accounts. Besides these payments the several parishes are subject to a charge for the governor's annual salary, which is 15*l.*, as well as for the repairs of the house and its furniture. The paupers in the house are now 21, of whom all are either aged persons or children, except two able-bodied males, and one female pregnant with an illegitimate child. The overseers of Clareborough are nominally the managers; but the government of it devolves almost entirely upon the governor, who acts also as assistant-overseer of the poor, and appears an ignorant and brutal person.

The accounts are not kept upon any system, and were in such confusion as to prevent my deriving from them any useful or accurate information.

Classification, discipline, and separation are quite unattended to. Beer and tobacco are permitted; and the egress or ingress of the paupers is subject to no restraint. However, the Rev. J. W. Brookes, the vicar, who is laudably attentive to his duty, visits this workhouse gratuitously and frequently. The paupers attend the parish church on Sundays, and the children go to the Sunday-school.

After this description of Clareborough workhouse, I feel bound to pronounce such an habitation for the poor in every point of view objectionable, and altogether discreditable to the parishes which unite in supporting such an ill-conducted and demoralizing establishment.

Ticket system.

When an able-bodied person with a family applies for relief, he is not sent to the workhouse, but relieved on the house row system, by giving him a ticket, stating the sum that he is to receive daily, which is thus apportioned: for a man and his wife from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 4*d.*; if they have children somewhat more; if five children about 2*s.* daily; if a single man about 1*s.*

The expense of bastards last year was 56*l.* 6*s.* for 10 illegitimate children; of this sum 18*l.* 18*s.* was received from putative fathers, leaving a deficiency of 37*l.* 8*s.*

Mothers of bastard children receive all the money paid by the fathers; under which distribution two women are receiving 3*s.* weekly for each child, and 4*s.* weekly has been paid. Surely this must operate as a premium upon incontinency.

Tuxford.

In continuing my line along the main road towards the south, the next market town is Tuxford, distant about seven miles from Retford.

The valuation made in 1810 was 6,202*l.*, but it is thought too high. The number of acres is 2,901. The rental in 1815 was 5,814*l.* The maintenance of the poor in 1831-32 was 252*l.* 3*s.* paid in money, and 60*l.* additional for the workhouse. Thirteen cottages have been erected upon land bequeathed to the parish for charitable purposes, and are occupied rent-free by poor families. There is an annual sum of 34*l.* which is distributed in doles amongst the poor. Employment in this parish is provided by an arrangement very closely approaching to a labour-rate, as every occupier rated at 50*l.* is compellable either to find employment or to pay the parish officer a sum equal to the regulated wages.

Workhouse.

A small cottage with a garden is rented at the extremity of this town, and occupied as a workhouse. It is under the care of a matron, who resides there with her son and daughter, both under the age of 12 years. The mother and her children are placed here as a substitute for parish relief. The present inmates of this poor-house are 11 in number, and are either very old or very young. The greatest number maintained in this house has been

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been 13. Able-bodied paupers are never sent hither, but are provided for under the system beforementioned. There is no difference in the treatment or diet of the paupers. No separation of sexes. The provisions are ordered by the overseers of the poor according to their discretion, without any fixed dietary. The inmates appear to be treated humanely, and they made no complaints. This parish is under the management of a select vestry, which has been thought useful. An assistant-overseer was formerly employed, but has been discontinued, as the person so employed was supposed to act with partiality. A dispensary upon the self-supported principle has been established in this town, and for the surrounding district, and has been liberally patronised by the contributions of those possessing the property in the town and neighbourhood.

Having now detailed minutely the administration of the poor laws prevailing throughout those parts of Nottinghamshire which are situated on the northern side of the river Trent, it next becomes my duty to complete the Report upon this county by proceeding to state such circumstances as remain to be noticed in traversing the district south of Trent.

The first town south of Trent entitled to observation is Newark, which is both a market town and a borough. Its population in 1831 was 9,557, being, with the exception of Doncaster, more numerous than that of any other town on the line of the great north road leading from London to York. It is the principal corn market in the county of Nottingham; besides which a very extensive trade in flour, coals, malt, ale and beer is carried on at Newark. There is no manufactory within the limits of the parish; but an extensive factory of sail-cloth and linen has long been established about two miles from Newark, in the parish of Hawton, where many of the parishioners of Newark are employed in weaving, and in work connected with this business.

The parochial concerns are transacted without either a select vestry or an assistant-overseer of the poor. The overseers of the poor annually appointed are four in number, who meet for the transaction of business in open vestry, with the vicar as their chairman, and transact the general concerns of the parish without consulting the parishioners, who, as I am informed, would object to any system of parochial management more strict than that which is now practised, and which, in the discharge of my duty, I shall detail.

The annual value of real property in 1815 was 26,418*l.* A valuation of the parish was made about four years since, which amounted upon the rackrent to ; upon one-third of which sum the rates are assessed, and all real property is brought into charge. The sum levied in the year 1831-32 was 3,250*l.*, from which if 450*l.* be deducted for county-rates, 2,800*l.* remains as the expenditure of the poor during this period. The relief granted to the poor is regulated by the discretion of the parish officers, without any general rule, and with very little interference on the part of the mayor and alderman, who are the magistrates acting exclusively for this borough. The modes of relief are money, either without employment, or to make up wages, or to pay rents, or as an abatement of poor levies in favour of widows. Paupers of every description are sent to the workhouse established in this parish. It is the avowed endeavour of the parish officers to withhold relief from able-bodied persons, except during sickness or affliction; such, however, is not the practice, as an additional sum is granted out of the poor-rates to make up wages. The sum of 2*s.* a head daily is given to adult males. The families employed at the linen factory are invariably relieved under the allowance system. The wages earned in this occupation by an adult male are only 8*s.* weekly, out of which 3*s.* 6*d.* is stopped by the manufacturer for the use of the room and for house rent; therefore the remaining sum required for subsistence is paid out of the poor-rates. The disbursements for house rents during the last year amounted to about 20*l.*, exclusive of what was so paid for widows. The number of resident paupers is now 200, all of whom are permanent; and in winter the number is increased. The progressive increase of pauperism in this parish may be thus exhibited:

	Expenditure for the Year 1829-30.			Expenditure for the Year 1831-32.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Permanent paupers	497	14	-	674	9	-
Casual paupers	434	19	-	687	4	-
	£. 932	13	9	1,361	13	-

The bastards constantly chargeable during last year to this parish were 45 in number, of whom 36 were wholly maintained by the parish, 1 partly, and 8 by the putative fathers. The sums expended on bastards in 1830-31 exceeded the money received by 126*l.* 4*s.* 8*d.* The practice of this parish, in cases of bastardy, is to have the child sworn as soon as possible, to apprehend the father under the warrant then issued, and to send him to the house of correction at Southwell, unless he finds surety for his appearance at the quarter sessions. The orders of filiation are all made in court, and although the fees may vary a little, the

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the usual expense of obtaining the order may be stated at 2*l.* 16*s.* The sum received by the parish officers from the putative father is invariably paid to the mother by the parish officers, under an impression that they are compellable so to do. If no money be received from the father the parish does not allow more than 1*s.* weekly to the mother. Marriages between the parties are not forced; but it was admitted that on such occasions a dinner or a few shillings were allowed. The mothers are never sent to the house of correction for first or second bastard, but are sometimes imprisoned for the third.

The workhouse, which is situated on the road to Hawton, was built in 1786 out of the funds of the charitable benefactions available for the weal of this borough. The number of paupers regularly maintained herein varied during the last year from 76 to 114. The number in the house when I visited it was 73, viz. 23 men, 22 women, 9 boys from ten to twenty years of age, 7 boys under ten years, 4 girls from ten to twenty years of age, and 8 under ten years, of whom 5 were idiots and none lunatics. The males were chiefly labourers and mechanics. The dietary is sufficient: meat is allowed three times weekly, together with beer at meals to all; but the able-bodied, if employed out of the house, have meat daily. Tea is given morning and evening to the aged and impotent. The only employment for adults within the house is a mill, used occasionally for wheat and other corn. The males and females live in different apartments; but as there is only one yard, the separation of the sexes is necessarily imperfect. Husbands and wives remain together at night. There is a school for the education of children under the age of ten years, and the poor walk in regular order to church on Sundays. The men procure tobacco and beer; but these indulgences are not granted by the governor unless they have worked hard. The only land attached to this house is a small garden, and a field sufficient for two cows. The books are not so kept as to exhibit the average cost of maintaining each pauper, but it is supposed to be about 3*s.* per week. Adjoining the workhouse is the borough gaol, a small edifice, with only two rooms, one for debtors, the other for criminal offenders.

The children at the age of fourteen are placed out as apprentices; the fee generally given is 5*l.*, and the period of the apprenticeship is either seven years or less, according to circumstances. Parents are not required to maintain their children. The charitable benefactions to this parish are very considerable. The sum directly applicable to the use of the poor is 299*l.* 12*s.*; besides which, Newark being a scot and lot borough, in which the late Parliamentary elections have been contested, very liberal donations in coals and otherwise are from time to time given to the voters in the winter season.

The accounts of this parish are not systematically kept. Newark-upon-Trent supplies a striking instance of the indifference or disinclination which prevails among parish officers in the management of the poor. This town is only eight miles distant from Southwell, and the whole of the intervening district is incorporated with the Thurgarton hundred workhouse, and conducted under Mr. Becher's system. Yet, with ready access to all necessary information, Newark still remains without availing itself of those benefits which would naturally result to the relievers and the relieved by the introduction of the "anti-pauper system." This brief statement will exhibit the excess of the expenditure at Newark:

Newark and
Southwell.

Expenditure of Newark and Southwell in Weekly Pensions or Allowances to the Poor, for the Year ended Lady-day 1832, according to the Population in 1831, being as 3,384 to 9,557.

PARISHES.	POPULATION.	Weekly Allowances to Poor, from 1831 to 1832.	Rate per Head on the Population.	Charitable Benefactions, per Annum.
		£.	s. d.	£. s. d.
Newark - - -	9,557	1,361	2 10	299 12 -
Southwell - - -	3,384	249	1 5 ½	94 6 -

The cost of the poor in the workhouse at Newark could not be ascertained so as to extend this comparison, but the average weekly maintenance of each pauper is supposed to be 3*s.* a head; whereas at Southwell, it is shown by their account-books to be only 1*s.* 9*d.*

This increase of expenditure may, among other causes, be ascribed to the want of an assistant-overseer, as well as to the desire of popularity, which in a borough subject to electioneering contests prevails more extensively than in other places.

The quarter sessions of the county is held by adjournment at Newark, and the petty sessions of the county magistrates for the Newark division, meets here once in every fortnight. On the day that I attended this petty sessions no application for relief occurred. When such allowances are granted, the weekly sum for adults is 2*s.* 3*d.* per head, and for children 1*s.* 3*d.* each. Roundsmen are not allowed, and the deficiency of wages is not made up under any order of the justices; in fact, the parishes in this district are, with a few exceptions, united under the Thurgarton hundred incorporation.

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Claypool
Workhouse.

The *Claypool* workhouse is distant about four miles from Newark, on the east side of the road to London, and is separated from Nottinghamshire merely by the river Witham, which divides this county from Lincolnshire. This workhouse stands in Lincolnshire; but as some Nottinghamshire parishes are united with it, I may perhaps, without impropriety, introduce a few observations upon it in this Report. The workhouse at Claypool was originated upon the recommendation of Sir Robert Heron, Bart. M. P., residing at Stubton. It was established about the year 1817, under Gilbert's Act, 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, and incorporated 20 parishes. Mr. Clarke, the governor, and his wife, the matron, acted for five years in similar capacities at Thurgarton hundred workhouse, which they were induced to leave at Lady-day 1832, by an increase of salary. The employment for the poor is provided upon a farm attached to the house, consisting of 60 acres, rented for the sum of 110 *l.* per annum. The advantages stated by the governor on behalf of the farm, are, first, employment for the paupers in the house; secondly, profit, as it paid for several years the expense of the house, with the exception of maintenance. However, it appears that since the depression in the price of agricultural produce this farm has not proved a profitable concern. It was subject to a debt of 40 *l.* when Mr. Clarke entered upon his office, and a rate of 113 *l.* has since been levied upon the united parishes to make up this and other deficiencies. The expenditure during the year was as follows:

	£.	s.	d.
Diet-book - - - - -	54	9	5
Clothing-book - - - - -	5	8	6
Farm-book - - - - -	15	4	10
Cash-book - - - - -	32	2	5½
	£. 107	5	2½

The weekly cost of maintenance is 1 *s.* 2 *d.* for children under seven years of age, and 2 *s.* 7½ *d.* for every other inmate. A distinct charge is made for the clothing of each pauper.

Two of the men in the house appeared able-bodied labourers, but the governor did not think either of them fully equal to the performance of a day's work.

The paupers employed on the farm or in the house are allowed one-eighth part of their estimated earnings. The paupers being insufficient to the cultivation of the farm, it has been occasionally necessary to hire labourers at the customary rate of wages according to the season of the year. The paupers are not allowed to quit the house except when employed.

Employment on
the farm.

This system, by converting the governor into a farming bailiff and the paupers into agricultural labourers in the ordinary mode of husbandry, seems even more objectionable than the practice of market-gardening at Basford, upon which my comments will be found in this Report. The governor is thus compelled to absent himself during a considerable portion of his time from the workhouse, and to associate with the paupers under circumstances little adapted to preserve his authority. The discipline of the house, the subordination of the paupers, and their moral improvement, as well as the general superintendence which such an establishment necessarily require are suspended, and the pecuniary transactions of the governor relating to the workhouse and the farm are thus rendered so complicated as to create considerable difficulty in proving the precise amounts of his receipts and payments on account of the farm, and the exact quantity of the produce applied to the use of the house. Under the direction of Sir Robert Heron, Bart., as the visitor and founder of this establishment, such a system may succeed to a certain extent; and it is stated that this workhouse is approved by the incorporated parishes, and has contributed mainly to reduce the amount of the poor-rates, but cannot be safely recommended as a desirable arrangement for the general management of workhouses.

In proceeding through the district south of Nottingham you travel towards the west for the first 12 miles along the ancient Foss or Roman Way leading from Lincoln through Newark to Leicester. Several of the parishes through which this road passes in the first nine miles are incorporated with the Thurgarton hundred workhouse, consequently are well managed under the "anti-pauper system," to which such frequent allusion has been made. The parishes are purely agricultural.

At the distance of about 12 miles from Newark, to the north of the Foss Road, stands the market town of *Bingham*, at which a petty sessions is held by the county magistrates on every Thursday.

Bingham.

This parish is principally agricultural, but the inhabitants derive employment from the stocking and lace manufactory at Nottingham, particularly females and children, which mode of employment, as you advance towards Nottingham, increases progressively, until we find it operating to its full extent. The hundred of Rushcliffe, which adjoins the hundred of Bingham, has thus been converted into a manufacturing district, so closely assimilated to the state of Broxtow hundred, before described, as to demand no observations beyond those made upon the Broxtow hundred, which are equally applicable to the parishes south of Trent connected with the staple manufacture of Nottinghamshire, as well as to the places situated on the borders of Leicestershire, in which the inhabitants are extensively engaged in the lace and stocking trade of that county.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major *W. Wylde*,
R. A.

The parish of Bingham contains 3,000 acres, all of which, except 300 acres, belong to the same proprietor. One half of the land is either pasture or meadow, the other half is arable, cultivated under a course of convertible husbandry; the whole of the soil is of a fertile loamy quality.

The expenditure on account of the poor had progressively increased to such an amount in the year 1816, that the Rev. Robert Lowe, rector of this parish, who acts as a magistrate for the county, submitted to the inhabitants the advantages that would derive from adopting a better mode of management; and to his influence, as well as to his suggestion, the inhabitants are principally indebted for the improvement in the conduct of the poor, and for the reduction of the parochial expenditure, which I shall now proceed to relate.

YEARS.	Expenditure on Account of the Poor.						
	£.						
1816	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,231
1817	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,206
1818	-	-	-	-	-	-	984
1819	-	-	-	-	-	-	711
1820	-	-	-	-	-	-	510
1821	-	-	-	-	-	-	478
1822	-	-	-	-	-	-	367

The expense of the poor during the last year was about 500*l*. Among the means adopted, it may be stated that this change, so beneficial both to the rate-payers and to the poor, has been effected by a more strict administration of the poor laws, by refusing relief to all able-bodied persons, and by permitting about 40 or 50 well-conducted labourers and manufacturers to occupy, severally, a potato garden, containing from half a rood to a rood of land, for which a common farming rent was required.

Every cottage was assessed to the poor-rate, and the mothers of such bastard children as became chargeable were invariably sent to the workhouse, whether for the first or second offence. The names of all persons receiving parish relief were made public.

Workhouse.

In addition to these measures a workhouse was established in the year 1818, under the statute 49 Geo. 3, c. 124, wherein the poor were sufficiently fed, but were kept under strict restraint and discipline. The diminution consequent upon the establishment of this workhouse, in conjunction with the other regulations enumerated, is exhibited by the rapid decrease in the amount of the parochial expenditure which followed the introduction of this change in the management of the poor.

The workhouse, which contained 45 inmates in 1818, was occupied when I visited it by only 16, namely, three aged men, five females, five boys and three girls. One of the women, Mary Bent, was there with her fourth bastard child, after having been once sent 12 months to the house of correction at Southwell, and will be again committed to the same prison. However, it appears that the payments for the maintenance of bastard children during the last five years was 48 *l*., of which 24 *l*. 16 *s*. 6 *d*. was recovered, leaving the actual loss to the parish only 23 *l*. 3 *s*. 6 *d*.

The Bingham workhouse is subject to the same objections that have been raised against several parochial workhouses. Its construction does not admit of that discipline which the law requires. There is neither separation of sexes, classification, employment nor education. It is merely a place of irksome confinement, which the labouring classes will not accept in a parish like Bingham, where sufficient employment may be procured by proper exertion. Therefore it forces upon the poor the duty of self-exertion.

The accounts were not kept with such regularity as might enable me to derive from them any correct information respecting the expenses of maintenance.

Having now completed my inquiries in the district south of Trent, I crossed this river at Gunthorpe Ferry, and finished my duties in this county by returning through Thurgarton to Southwell.

Thurgarton.

Thurgarton is situated three miles south of Southwell, on the road leading to Nottingham. This parish contains 2,530 acres. The annual value of the real property assessed under the Property Tax Act in 1815 was 3,406 *l*.; the population in 1831 consisted of 329 persons, all employed in agriculture, with the exception of the handicraftsmen required for the accommodation of the inhabitants.

As Mr. Becher has been for more than 34 years the incumbent of this perpetual curacy, it may be adduced as a satisfactory exemplification of the system which he advocates in the administration of the poor laws, and of the practical good resulting, both to land occupiers and labourers, from the observance of the principles which he endeavours to recommend.

Account-books.

This parish is under the management of an assistant-overseer, who acts upon his own responsibility in cases of sudden emergency, but consults the churchwardens and overseers of the poor on other occasions. There is no select vestry, but the parish officers meet monthly to investigate parochial concerns, and to audit the accounts, which are submitted to

to their inspection in the day-book; and when examined and approved by them, are posted into the ledger. These books, with the "pay-book" and the "Register," are kept strictly according to the forms prescribed for this district by Mr. Becher, as will appear by the transcript of the parochial accounts and records for Thurgarton during the years 1830-31 and 1831-32, transmitted to the Poor Law Commissioners. From these documents the following important facts may be collected: The total expenditure for the poor in the year 1831-32 was 57*l.* 8*s.* 5½*d.*, of which sum 15*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.* was actually paid to the poor, being a fraction more than one penny in the pound, and 1*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* for bastards. In the last week of the year 1831-32 only 4*s.* 6*d.* weekly was given to the poor, and but two adults were then actually chargeable; one being a blind man with four children, and the other a very aged labourer in sickness. The occupiers of parish cottages pay rent for them to the overseers of the poor. The charities do not produce more than 4*l.* 19*s.* yearly.

The medium expenditure for the poor during three years, ended at Lady-day 1823, and reduced to its lowest sum, as the standard for computing the proportionate payments to the Thurgarton hundred incorporation, was 149*l.*; whereas the annual expenditure for the year 1831-32 having been 57*l.* 8*s.* 5½*d.*, it would require an increase of 160 per cent. before this sum would advance to 149*l.*, its former amount. Comparative expenditure.

Now as the same system of management had been adopted previously to the year 1823, with the exception of Thurgarton hundred workhouse, with which this parish is incorporated, it is affirmed, and in my judgment very correctly, that this reduction of the parish expenditure now effected could not have been realized without the check afforded by this workhouse. For, in addition to the conclusion deducible from the medium beforementioned, I am referred by Mr. Becher to the Parliamentary returns printed in the year 1803, to prove that the number of adult paupers was in that year seven, being five more than the present number; that the expenditure for the poor was in the same year 152*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*, being an increase of 166 per cent. upon its present amount; and that the annual average cost of the poor for the year 1783, 1784, and 1785, was 67*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* So that on referring back nearly half a century, it is shown that the expenditure for the poor was then 17 per cent. higher than at this time. Such are the pecuniary benefits; but the improved condition and the independent circumstances of the working classes present objects of still higher importance.

At Thurgarton the whole of the land is under cultivation according to the regular course of husbandry in this county. The unmarried labourers reside in the house of their masters, as servants; and the married labourers occupy cottages, for which they pay a reasonable rent to the owners. A few cottages belong to the parish, which are inhabited by labourers with large families, at a reduced rent, or by widows.

Every labourer possesses a garden to the extent of about half a rood of land. Some labourers, as a reward for good conduct, are allowed to pasture a cow on the land of their employer, and to cut grass sufficient for hay during the winter. A few others are indulged with permission to rent a small quantity of grass-land for similar purposes. But these last two cases seldom comprise any labourers except those who have accumulated a small capital by their industry, and are then styled cottagers. Gardens.

It appears from the books of the Southwell savings-bank that the sums there deposited by the Thurgarton labourers and servants exceed 1,250*l.*; besides which, 70*l.* have been paid for the purchase of assurances in the Southwell Friendly Institution; moreover, it is well known that others have realized capital, and placed it out at interest on other security, or in different savings-banks. In this parish the labourers have reared large families, exceeding occasionally 12 children, without parochial relief, under an honest impression that it would be a degrading sacrifice of independence to apply for such a pittance to the parish. Deposits.

The administration of the poor laws in Nottinghamshire may be thus defined: In the centre of this county is situated the market town and parish of Southwell, encircled by 49 parishes, incorporated under the Statute 22 Geo. 3, c. 83. Throughout the whole of this district the "anti-pauper system," as it is denominated by the Rev. J. T. Becher, is adopted under his superintendence, in conformity with the regulations prescribed in his pamphlet entitled the "Anti-pauper System," and fully explained in his evidence before the Committee of the Lords upon the poor laws in 1831. Southwell and Thurgarton, stated at the head of these 50 parishes, may be cited as examples of perfect parochial management; the others vary in their approximation to excellence. But although a difference may arise from the comparative exertions of the parish officers, or from local circumstances, still the system is in effective operation. The administration of the poor laws and the book-keeping are the same. The regulations of the workhouses in all their departments appear quite satisfactory, while that misinterpretation of the poor laws, and that magisterial usurpation of authority, which has introduced the allowance system, with its baneful concomitants, prevailing in other places, are unknown in this district. Poor Laws in Nottinghamshire.

More than 10 years have elapsed since the progress of these evils was effectually arrested in these parts. The allowance system had previously commenced; but it was only creeping clandestinely into practice, in opposition to the advice and opinions of the magistracy. It was discountenanced, but not absolutely suppressed, until admonition had proved unavailing, Allowance system discontinued.

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unavailing, and the probability of its rapid extension was apprehended. Therefore these 50 parishes may be enumerated as affording specimens of good management, and as having emerged, some in a higher and some in a lower degree, from bad management. These practical advantages resulting from this system, and the testimonies of the parish officers in confirmation of its utility, together with the recommendations of the country gentlemen and principal land stewards, are found upon the lists of guardians, whose names have naturally influenced other parishes not attached to the incorporation; so that it appears both from the parochial returns to the queries of the Commissioners, and from my personal inquiries, that the allowance system has been discontinued in many places where it once existed, and that its prevalence in the agricultural parts of this county is not at present considerable.

Southwell system.

Thus by the instrumentality of the Southwell system, which consists principally in a scrupulous adherence to the law, have the central parts of Nottinghamshire been entirely, and the other parts of the county partially, rescued from the evils of existing or impending pauperism. At the same time the magistrates acting in the petty sessions at Bingham, have been strenuously and successfully exerting themselves to restrain the inroads of pauperism in their district, by firmly resisting the allowance system, and by acting upon principles very closely allied to the practice of Southwell. The Southwell division, so often alluded to, enumerates, in addition to the parish of Southwell, the following parishes and townships: the incorporated parishes of Averham, Boughton, Cotham, Cauntton, Cromwell, South Collingham, Egmantton, Edwinstowe, Eakring, Flintham, Halloughton, Hockerton, Kelham, Kilvington, Kirklington, Kneesal, Laxton, Langford, North Muskham, South Muskham, Maplebeck, Norwell, Ossington, Rolleston, East Stoke, Sutton-on-Trent, Syerston, Staythorpe, Screveton, Thurgarton, Thorpe, Upton, Walesby, Wellow, Winkburn, Weston, Winthorpe; the incorporated townships of Alverton, Bathley, Budby, Carlton-upon-Trent, Grassthorpe, Holme, Norwell Woodhouse, Ompton, Ollerton, Perlethorpe, Rufford. The rental of real property in this district assessed under the Property Tax Act in 1815 was 116,082*l*. The population, according to the census in 1831, was 18,358.

Fluctuations of trade.

In the manufacturing district pauperism is mainly influenced by the fluctuations of the lace and hosiery trades, which constitute the staple occupation of the artificers in this county. In these branches of manufacture an occasional depression produces in some instances almost a total suspension of employment, and sometimes reduces the manufacturing district to a state of pauperism not to be exceeded by that of any other place or county. The district to which I chiefly allude is the town of Nottingham and the adjoining hundred of Broxtow, upon which parts the assessments under the property-tax in 1815, and the population, according to the census of 1831, were as follows:

	Annual Value in 1815.	Population in 1831.
	£.	
County of the town of Nottingham - - - -	42,336	50,680
Hundred of Broxtow - - - - -	107,621	65,826
Total of District - - - £.	149,957	116,506

Pauperism in 1816-17 and 1819-20.

Voluntary contributions.

Application for rate in aid.

Distribution of subscription by committee.

The pressure of pauperism to its extreme point was experienced by this district in 1816-17, being the period at which the offence called Luddism was in force; and another depression occurred in the year 1819-20. In both these periods the burdens upon the parochial rates were so oppressive as to become almost unsupportable by the contributors; therefore voluntary subscriptions throughout the county were proposed and approved, so that in 1816 about 5,000*l*. was thus collected, and in 1819 nearly the same sum, together with a subscription to a large amount in aid of foreign colonization, the details of which will be found in Mr. Becher's evidence before the Emigration Committee in the year 1825, as well as in his evidence on the poor laws in 1831. So numerous, I understand, at that time were the applications for parochial relief, that in the year 1817, the parishes being absolutely unable to levy the assessments required, actually applied to the quarter sessions for a rate in aid upon the hundred of Broxtow, to obtain which, if possible, the parish of Arnold retained special counsel, under the Act 42 Eliz. c. 2, s. 3; but their application for this purpose to the quarter sessions failed, as it was found impracticable to construe the words of the above statute so as to bring them into actual operation; therefore a committee was appointed by the voluntary subscribers for the purpose of distributing the money raised, in such manner as to them might seem expedient. The committee consisted of the late Wm. Sherbrooke, Esq., then chairman of the sessions for the Nottingham division, together with some of the magistrates acting for the pauperised parts, and the Rev. J. T. Becher. This committee assembled weekly at Red Hill, about four miles north of Nottingham, on the road to Mansfield, to dispense relief on this occasion. The principle proposed

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proposed by Mr. Sherbrooke and Mr. Becher, and established as the rule of distribution, was, that no part of the subscription should be expended, except in payment for labour actually performed. The minutes that Mr. Becher made at the first committee meeting, on the 7th day of January 1817, are now before me, from which it appears, that in the parish of Arnold, assessed under the Property Tax Act in 1815 upon 5,276 *l.*, the weekly expenditure had been in the month of November 1816, 344 *l.* 5 *s.*, being at the rate of 4,131 *l.* per annum, and that the expenditure for the poor then amounted to 90 *l.* weekly, or 4,680 *l.* annually; that the population by the census in 1811 was 3,042; and that the cases of paupers then receiving relief amounted to 1,096, which, allowing two and a half individuals for the families included in each case, shows the entire number of paupers to be 2,740.

From the same minutes I collect that Sutton-in-Ashfield, assessed in 1815 under the Property Tax Act upon 6,976 *l.*, was then expending daily 10 *l.* 2 *s.* 8 *d.*, being at the rate of 3,698 *l.* 13 *s.* 4 *d.* annually, and that Hucknal-Torkard, assessed under the Property Tax Act in 1815 upon 3,119 *l.*, was then expending at the rate of 2,713 *l.* yearly for the relief of the poor; and I could proceed with similar illustrations by extracting from Mr. Becher's minutes other parishes under similar circumstances of distress, but the instances adduced will for the present purpose suffice: and I have more especially brought them under your view, as the Parliamentary Returns will confirm this statement, and supply the following prominent facts:

PARISHES.	Assessment upon Property Tax in 1815.	Population in 1811.	Expenditure for Poor for 1816-17.
Arnold - - - - -	£. 5,276	3,042	£. 3,270
Sutton-in-Ashfield - - -	6,976	3,386	3,035
Hucknal-Torkard - - -	3,119	1,793	2,229

Sutton-in-Ashfield purchased a share in the incorporated workhouse in 1820, and Hucknal-Torkard formed a part of the original union. The benefits resulting from this union will be thus strikingly exemplified: Reduction of Expenditure.

PARISHES.	Population in 1821.	Population in 1831.	Expenditure for Poor in 1820, before union with Workhouse.	Expenditure in 1821, being the first Year after union with Workhouse.	Decrease per cent.
Sutton-in-Ashfield	3,943	4,805	£. 2,636 Expenditure for poor in 1817.	£. 1,382 Expenditure for poor in 1821.	48 $\frac{4}{10}$
Hucknal-Torkard -	1,940	2,200	£. 2,229	£. 759	66

This reduction may be in some measure ascribed to the improvement in the hosiery trade, but in the estimation of the parish officers, the union with Basford workhouse has been essentially instrumental towards effecting this diminution in the parochial expenditure. Such also is my own opinion, accompanied with this observation: that the workhouse would not have produced this beneficial effect unless it had been under better regulations than the ordinary houses of this description.

To explain these assumptions we may compare Sutton-in-Ashfield, which is associated with Basford workhouse, about three miles west of Mansfield, with Mansfield-Woodhouse, which has a workhouse of its own, under 9 Geo. 1, c. 7, and is about two miles north of the same place. Both of these are manufacturing villages, in the stocking trade. The former is surrounded by about 5,861 acres of land, and the latter by 5,290 acres. Both parishes resort to Mansfield as their market town. In addition to these affinities, the Parliamentary documents afford the following facts, in extension of the comparison:

Comparison of Sutton-in-Ashfield and Mansfield-Woodhouse.

PARISHES.	Annual Value assessed under Property Tax Act in 1815.	Population in 1821.	Population in 1831.	Expenditure for Poor in			
				1820.	1821.	1825.	1828.
	£.			£.	£.	£.	£.
Sutton-in-Ashfield -	6,976	3,943	4,805	2,636	1,382	809	1,04*
Mansfield-Woodhouse	4,527	1,598	1,859	1,263	825	590	610

* The year 1829 is the last for which the Returns have been printed by Parliament, but has not been selected, as the annual expenditure of Sutton-in-Ashfield is there stated to be only 175 *l.* 16 *s.*, which is manifestly a mistake or misprint.

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Hence it appears that the increase of population from 1821 to 1831 was at Sutton-in-Ashfield 21 per cent., and at Mansfield-Woodhouse only 16 per cent.; whereas the decrease of the expenditure, taking the years 1820 and 1828, was at Sutton-in-Ashfield 61 per cent., and at Mansfield-Woodhouse only 52 per cent. Moreover, the population of Sutton in 1831 being 4,805, and that of Mansfield-Woodhouse 1,859; the parochial expenditure of Sutton, which in 1831 was 1,054 *l.* would require for Mansfield-Woodhouse, assuming population as the basis, only 407 *l.*; but the expenditure at Mansfield-Woodhouse has been shown to be 610 *l.*; therefore it exceeds the proportion which it should bear to Sutton by 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. These two parishes have severally emerged from a bad to a better state of management, exhibiting the more favourable change in the parish of Sutton-in-Ashfield, which has been incorporated with Basford workhouse, although much yet remains to be done in the parochial book-keeping and management before they can obtain the commendation of being "extremely good." In general terms it may be affirmed, that the best managed parishes are connected with the best managed workhouses; such as the parish of Southwell and the Thurgarton hundred incorporation. The next in order of excellence are the parishes connected with Basford workhouse, which establishment is next in good management to those last abovementioned. The worst managed parishes are those which are connected with the worst regulated workhouses; such as the poor-houses at East Retford and Clareborough. If any reduction is effected in a parish by means of such establishment, it results, not from the good management, nor from any sound principles of administration, but from a system of terror, which induces the poor to endure any privations short of actual starvation rather than submit to the horrors of such a receptacle as the poor-house at Clareborough.

Rejection of
allowance system.

Among the parishes which have introduced the allowance system and afterwards rejected it, we may mention Annesley, Barnby, Blythe, Colston, Bassett, Coddington, Flint-hain, Hawksworth, East Markham, Bleasby, Rufford, Halloughton, Garnston, Bothamsal, South Collingham and others. It has been discontinued for 10 or 12 years at Southwell, and in the whole of the Thurgarton hundred incorporation, as well as in several other places which have not yet made any return to the queries of the Poor Law Commissioners; besides which, it has been stated by many parishes that the allowance system, after having been tried, has not been found to answer.

Prevalence of
allowance system.

Among those parishes wherein this system still continues, we may enumerate Clayworth, Clareborough, Tuxford, Newark, and other parishes which might be mentioned, though not in any great numbers, in the agricultural districts; but in the manufacturing parts, by which I particularly allude to the Broxtow hundred, this practice at all times prevails to a limited extent, and in any considerable suspension of the staple employment it is proportionally extended.

Having thus endeavoured to exhibit "the good and bad management" at the present time existing in such parishes as have been selected for this purpose, it next devolves upon me to adduce instances of good and bad workhouse management.

Workhouse
management.

In Nottinghamshire the several parishes and townships, with very few exceptions, possess the benefit of workhouses, either by incorporation or by association, or by a parochial poor-house. No local Act has yet been obtained for the management of the poor in this county; consequently my present observations relate wholly to the operation of the statute law as applicable to such establishments.

Incorporated
Workhouses under
22 G. 3, c. 83.

The incorporated workhouses are two in number, one is denominated the Thurgarton hundred workhouse, and incorporates 49 parishes, which are not all situated within the hundred, as parishes appertaining to other hundreds, but being within the prescribed distance of 10 miles, form a part of the incorporation, so that the limits are defined by a radius of 10 miles from the workhouse, and not by the ancient boundaries of any hundred. The plan of this workhouse, which was designed by Mr. Becher, has been prefixed to his pamphlet, entitled the "Anti-pauper System," which also contains a complete exposition of the system under which it is regulated. Therefore, it may suffice to state, that the house and buildings are constructed for the purpose of classification, salutary restraint and strict discipline. The males and females occupy opposite wings of the buildings, and the children are placed in the centre. Two day-rooms and courtyards are assigned to the males, and the like number to the females; so that the infirm and guiltless poor of each sex may be separated from the sturdy and profligate.

The dietary allows meat twice a week; the weekly cost of maintenance for males is 2 *s.* 2 *d.*; for females, 1 *s.* 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; for children under 15, 1 *s.* 1 *d.* Apparel for males, 6 *d.*; for females, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; and for children, 3 *d.* weekly. Fermented liquors, including small beer, as well as tobacco, are prohibited, unless ordered by the surgeon. The house is well ventilated; the cleanliness is not to be exceeded; the children are regularly schooled; and the whole establishment presents an useful example of subordination and judicious government.

The rules are those prescribed in the schedule to Gilbert's Act, 22 Geo. 3, without variation. This workhouse is designed for the reception of the infirm, the aged and the young poor, when destitute of friends to undertake the charge of them; so that whenever an able-bodied pauper is admitted, he is sent hither, not as a regular inmate, but for the purpose of subjecting him to such a system of discipline and of discomfort, when con-
trasted

trusted with his idle or vicious habits, as may force upon him the duties of personal industry, good conduct and self-support.

To define distinctly the objects of Mr. Becher in this incorporation, I will adopt his own words: "Let it, however, be remembered that the advantages resulting from a workhouse must arise, not from keeping the poor in the house, but from keeping them out of it, by constraining the inferior classes to know and feel how demoralizing and degrading is the compulsory relief drawn from the parish to silence the clamour and to satisfy the cravings of wilful and woful indigence; but how sweet and wholesome is that food, and how honourable is that independence, which is earned by persevering and honest industry."

I have merely to add, without wishing to withhold from Mr. Becher any portion of the commendation due to him, that this system having been once established, and the rights and privileges of the poor, as well as the check upon both the expenditure and conduct of the officers having been distinctly defined, I am unable, after having possessed for nearly six months constant opportunities of inspection, to discern any reason for not fully coinciding with the opinion anxiously expressed by Mr. Becher, that if his superintendence was by death or otherwise determined, successors might readily be found to conduct his system; as the difficulty arises in origination, not in perpetuating the operation and management of such an establishment.

Employment is not contemplated as a source of profit, beyond the necessary household duties and the cultivation of the land attached to the workhouse.

The other workhouse, erected by incorporation, is situated at Basford, two miles north of Nottingham, of which a detailed account has been given in the preceding part of this Report.

These are the only two incorporated workhouses; and, in my opinion, the only two establishments for united parishes in this county that can be recommended for imitation, or even tolerated by the Legislature.

The workhouses erected under the statute 9 Geo. 1, c. 7, for associated parishes, such as the workhouses at Gedling, Ruddington, Blyth, Retford and Clareborough, are deficient in all those regulations which protect the landowners and occupiers without invading the just rights of the poor. Such poor-houses may enable parish officers to reduce the rates, by the abhorrence with which the poor must view their confinement in a receptacle where moral distinctions are completely confounded, where the profligate and the innocent poor are mingled without discrimination, and where neither a visitor nor a minister of religion is attached to the institution; but the poor, being once consigned to such abodes, are suffered to linger in a state of wretched existence, without being inspected more than three or four times in a year by their parish officers, and sometimes without even having been so visited by them. These disgraceful poor-houses have brought the general system of workhouses into disrepute; yet it must be admitted that they exhibit, not the use, but the abuse of the workhouse system.

The workhouse for the parish of Southwell may be mentioned as an instance of a proper constructed and well managed poor-house for a single parish. I know not of any other parochial workhouse that I could safely recommend or place in competition with it.

In closing this Report, it is incumbent upon me to remark, that the magistrates for the county have not indicated the slightest desire to assume, in the administration of the poor laws, any authority which is not devolved upon them by the Legislature. As far as my observations have extended, no inclination exists on their part to interfere with the just powers or privileges of the parish officers; neither have I been able to hear of any acts or expression on the part of the magistrates evincing a jealousy of the incorporation, under 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, by which the authority of the justices to order parochial relief has been superseded. At the first commencement of these establishments, when the guardians on several occasions informed the magistrates that it was no longer their province to order parochial relief, the justices appear, from the representations made to me by the guardians, to have acquiesced very contentedly in this important change of system.

In this and in my other Reports having so frequently mentioned the "anti-pauper system" and the name of the Rev. J. T. Becher, it will naturally be expected that I should not complete this Report without some explanatory observations upon the origin and operation of this system; in discharging which duty, I shall found my conclusions upon the authority of oral testimony and of written parochial documents submitted to my inspection.

It appears that Mr. Becher commenced his endeavours to repress pauperism and immorality by appointing, with the concurrence of the magistrates, a permanent parish constable, who has now executed this office for 27 years, and by placing the alehouses under strict regulations as to the time of night at which their doors were to be closed; which restrictions, after considerable opposition on the part of the publicans, were successfully effected, and printed regulations for the purpose were annually delivered to each publican.

On the 27th day of June 1806, it is shown by the records of the parish that Mr. Becher proposed and obtained the consent of a vestry meeting for the erection of the present workhouse, which building was subsequently completed upon its present plan according to the design that he proposed. The distribution of the apartments was arranged according to the classification, separation and seclusion which he then contemplated. The governor

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and the matron, with the children, occupy the centre ; the males are placed in one wing and the females in the other, without the power of intercommunication. Besides which, the windows are so situated as to afford the officers a complete inspection over the yards assigned to each class.

On the 10th September 1806 Mr. Becher printed his report upon the defects of the house of correction, which, on his presentment, was adjudged to be insufficient, and, in consequence, the present house of correction at Southwell, for the county of Nottingham, was erected, with the several provisions for the classification and reformation of prisoners, which have invariably prevailed under the regulation and discipline of this well-governed prison.

On the 26th October 1811 a notice for a vestry meeting was issued, upon Mr. Becher's recommendation, for the purpose of placing the Southwell workhouse under the rules prescribed by 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, pursuant to the powers of 50 Geo. 3, c. 50, which measures were approved and confirmed by the petty sessions. In 1810 he proposed a new parochial rate, and superintended the framing of it, which assessment was adopted without a single appeal. At the same time he arranged and prescribed the system of book-keeping for parochial accounts, which has since that period been practised at Southwell. In 1812, finding the assistant-overseer unequal to the duties of his office, he recommended and obtained the election of Mr. Paul Bausor, who has now been for 21 years in daily communication with Mr. Becher, and who has discharged the functions of his office with judgment, zeal and integrity, not less creditable to himself than advantageous to the parishioners. In 1817 Mr Bausor, under Mr. Becher's direction, took an account of the poor at Southwell, with their children, and ascertained their means of support possessed by each family respectively, in conformity with the principle adopted at Manchester, and appended to the Report of the Lord's Committee upon the Poor Laws in that year. But Mr. Bausor finding a disinclination on the part of the parish officers to support him in the practical execution of the system prescribed by Mr. Becher for his guidance, which required a strict adherence to the interpretation of the laws, as well as to the suggestions contained in the Parliamentary Reports on the Poor Laws in 1817, requested Mr. Becher, in the year 1821, to strengthen his authority, by nominating George Nicholls, Esq. an overseer of the poor. This office was so held by Mr. Nicholls for two years ; and no person can bear stronger evidence than Mr. Becher does in favour of his sound discretion and acute discernment in co-operating with the magistrates and with Mr. Bausor for the purpose of executing the laws and the measures required to check the march of pauperism. In 1818 Mr. Becher convened a meeting to establish the Southwell Savings-bank, and afterwards published a system of book-keeping well adapted for this and similar institutions. In 1823 he originated the Southwell Friendly Institution ; ascertained by extensive inquiries the ratio of sickness among mankind, which had never before been determined, and computed those tables for friendly societies, which have since been published, and largely discussed by the Committee of the House of Commons on Friendly Societies in 1825, and afterwards in 1827. In 1831 he devised a system of endowments, and computed copious tables for its use ; under which arrangements any of the annuities grantable by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt may be assured on the same terms to any individual in Southwell, besides providing several different modes of assurance highly beneficial to persons not in affluent circumstances. In the year 1823 Mr. Becher, anxious to extend the benefits of the "anti-pauper system," convened a public meeting at Southwell, which was attended by the gentlemen, the landowners, the land-stewards and the principal occupiers residing in this district. At this meeting it was unanimously resolved to establish the Thurgarton hundred incorporation, in which 49 parishes united ; and from the laying of the foundation stone and the original plan proposed by himself, I cannot, after minute inquiry, learn that in the numerous, novel and important regulations of that well-managed poor-house, he has derived assistance from any individual in the book-keeping or in the domestic department, or availed himself of any suggestion, except such as have arisen in conversation with Mr. Bausor, the secretary, on a vigilant inspection of the consequences resulting from the operation of the rules and regulations enforced at this institution. It is gratifying to reflect, that among the guardians a perfect unanimity has subsisted upon all questions connected with the interest of the parishes or the discipline of this workhouse.

Conclusion.

In this minute statement of the circumstances connected with the "anti-pauper system," I have been influenced by a disposition to render to each individual his due, and by a desire to testify that, in meliorating the condition of the poor, it would be fruitless to propose any solitary measure as adequate for this important end ; since the re-establishment of that character among the working classes, which has been unhappily deteriorated by a combination of unfortunate causes, must be rectified by summoning to our aid, not only a better administration of the poor laws, but by bringing into active and beneficent operation all those means which natural feeling and religious influence urgently recommend for rekindling that virtuous independence, honest industry and grateful attachment which once characterized the poor in this kingdom, and which it is hoped may yet be revived.

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PART II.

REPORT on the Administration of the POOR LAWS, and the Management of the
POOR, in the County of *Lincoln*.Lincolnshire.
General remarks.

LINCOLNSHIRE has occupied my attention, after having completed my duties in Nottinghamshire, as an Assistant Poor-Law Commissioner. This county is bounded on the west by Nottinghamshire, and is characterized by some very striking peculiarities. Its area is next in extent to that of Yorkshire, as it contains 1,758,720 square acres. Its population, by the census of 1831, contains 317,400 persons, being, upon each square mile, $115\frac{1}{2}$ persons, or in the proportion of one person for every five and a half square acres; which yields a greater number of acres to each person than is so assignable in any English county, except Westmorland. We can also adduce in this county examples of the best and of the worst management respecting the poor, both in parishes and in workhouses; upon which circumstances I shall, in the progress of this Report, introduce such illustrations and comments as occur to me.

In proceeding through this county, I shall commence with the city of *Lincoln*, and its liberties. Hence I shall proceed along the western boundary of the county to Gainsborough, from which town I shall pass on to Grimsby, upon the eastern coast. Taking the district on that side, and passing through Louth and Boston, I shall return through Stamford, at the southern extremity, to Grantham, and terminate my circuit at the workhouse in Claypool, upon which I have before made some observations in the Nottinghamshire Report, as standing upon the banks of the river Witham, which divides Lincolnshire from Nottinghamshire, at the distance of four miles from Newark.

Line of observation.

The city of Lincoln is situated upon an eminence, and extends to its base; at the foot of this ascent runs the river Witham, which is navigable to Boston on the east, and forms a junction with the river Trent, at Torksey, on the west; thus a considerable trade by water is carried on in agricultural produce, coals, and other articles of consumption, at Lincoln, and in the surrounding district. In this city there is no staple manufacture, neither does any such establishment exist in this county; the woollen trade formerly prevailed extensively throughout Lincolnshire, and attempts have been recently made to revive it, under the patronage of the nobility and gentry; but these efforts have completely failed, which may perhaps be ascribed in a great measure to the non-existence of coal mines, and to its thin population. Therefore we may contemplate this county as providing employment for the working classes by agriculture, by handicraft trades, exercised for the consumption of the inhabitants, by its internal navigation, and by the employment in shipping in the sea-ports, as well as in fishing. Consequently, the demand for labour is not subject to the fluctuations that occur at Nottingham and in the manufacturing district around it, which causes operate powerfully towards the increase of pauperism, so that applications for employment from the really able-bodied poor, I was informed by the overseers, are rare in the city of Lincoln, except in seasons of severe frost, when the navigation of the Witham is suspended.

Situation and circumstances.

The statute 36 Geo. 3, c. 102, was passed for the better relief of the poor of the several parishes within the city of Lincoln, and was subsequently amended by the Act 1 & 2 Geo. 4, c. 49. Under these statutes 19 parishes are at present incorporated for the maintenance and employment of the poor, of which 13 are situated within the city of Lincoln, one without the city, and five in the county. Two parishes within the city and two within the county were formerly embodied under the provisions of these Acts, but have since seceded, which must not be adduced as in anywise unfavourable to the system; because these parishes, being unable to provide the money required for the original purchase of the workhouse, were precluded the power of participating in its advantages, which exclusion is now mentioned by their officers as a source of regret. The rental of the parishes in the city and liberty of Lincoln having been stated, in the Return under the property tax in 1815, at 44,396 *l.* in a single sum, prevents my specifying the annual value of the real property of the incorporated parishes; but the expenditure for the maintenance of the poor in the parishes now united, in the year 1821, was 2,777 *l.* 5 *s.*, with a population of 9,558, and in 1829, 3,024 *l.* 1 *s.*, with a population of 11,107, as given in the census of 1831; the population having increased 16 per cent. and the poor-rate $8\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. in this period. Hence it appears that the ratio of the poor-rate, computed upon the population in 1821, was 5 *s.* 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* for each person, and in 1829, 5 *s.* 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* The poor-rates amount yearly to about 1 *s.* in the pound upon the annual value of the property assessed.

Statutes for the management of the poor.

Under the Acts before mentioned the entire management of the poor is vested in the mayor and aldermen of the city of Lincoln, and in every inhabitant of the incorporated parishes respectively rated and assessed to the relief of the poor, who shall be in actual possession of rents and profits of lands, tenements, or tithes in fee, or for life, or for a term of ten years, of the clear yearly value of 15 *l.* and upwards; or who shall be rated at 10 *l.* and upwards, and assessed on personal property to the amount of 300 *l.* or upwards. Such persons constitute the guardians of the poor within the city of Lincoln and the liberties thereof. These guardians are, at a public meeting of each parish, to elect one director for such parish. To the directors so chosen, together with the mayor and three aldermen

Incorporation and its constitution.

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nominated by that body, the superintendence of the parishes, both in and out of the workhouse, the amount of the assessments to be levied in each parish, and all other parochial matters, are delegated. The minister and curate, as well as every person having a clear estate of 100 *l.* a year in lands or tenements, may also qualify as a director and act at all meetings. The directors hold their meetings weekly and quarterly; any three make a quorum at the former and seven at the latter. Three guardians are annually appointed auditors of the accounts, which are published under their authority; and at the quarterly meeting, the treasurer, clerk, governor and matron, are appointed. The churchwardens and overseers of the poor continue to collect the rates levied on their several parishes; they bring under the consideration of the directors all applications for parochial relief, and distribute the allowance granted by the directors, but are themselves prohibited from ordering any such relief. Therefore their chief duties consist in a general superintendence of the poor, in the collection of the assessments, and in the payment of them into the hands of the treasurer. In the year 1821 the statute 1 & 2 Geo. 4, c. 49, was passed to amend the abovementioned Act. It extends the privilege of incorporation to several additional parishes situated in the county of Lincoln, which two of the parishes did not carry into effect.

Apportionment of
assessment.

The apportionment of the assessment for each parish, which was by the former Act to be computed on an average of ten years, has by this Act been restricted to an average of seven years; upon which principle the expenditure on account of the poor in each parish is from time to time calculated, and remains binding until the expiration of that period. An important clause has also been introduced, enabling the guardians to convene a special meeting of the guardians and directors, to examine, determine and audit all matters relating to this incorporation, and the business thereof, and to make such regulations as may be thought fit, which then become binding upon the directors. Parishes are empowered to withdraw on giving six months notice.

Directors.

I have deemed it advisable to enter minutely into the principles upon which this incorporation for the management of the poor has been constituted, because it appears to me that the administration of the existing Poor Laws, if diligently and discreetly conducted, as at Lincoln, where the persons holding the appointment of directors are respectable tradesmen, have been found sufficient to protect the kingdom against that pauperism with which several parishes, districts, and even counties, have been overwhelmed.

Workhouse.

After the passing of the Act of incorporation in 1796, a large building, situated at a short distance without the town, which had been erected for a glue manufactory, was purchased and fitted up as a workhouse, to which 16 acres of land, held in part under the dean and chapter and partly under the corporation, are attached. The house, with the land, cost about 2,000 *l.*, and is adapted for the reception of about 260 persons; but not having been built for this purpose, it is deficient in the means of separation, classification and discipline, so desirable in an establishment of this kind; the good effects of which are so conspicuous in the Thurgarton hundred workhouse. As far as its means will admit, however, these objects appear to be properly considered. The inmates are not allowed to leave the house at any time without permission from the directors. The provisions supplied are good and sufficient. Spirits and fermented liquors are prohibited, except the table-beer brewed in the house. The idle and dissolute, if able-bodied, are restricted in their diet, and are employed in laborious work: by these means, paupers of this description seldom remain long at the house. The average expense of maintenance and apparel for the paupers in the house during the last five years has been 2 *s.* 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* per week for maintenance, and 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* for clothing. This sum of 2 *s.* 10 *d.* includes all the extra provisions supplied to the sick poor and the additional clothing for the poor on leaving the house and going out to service. The women spin the flax for clothing and sheets, and make and mend all the apparel for the inmates. The average number of persons in the house for the last four years was 100. There is a school in the house for the younger children, and the elder ones attend the national school. The chaplain visits gratuitously; and, I was informed, is very assiduous in his attention to the religious instruction of both the old and young. I was assured that this house, although, from the causes above stated, defective in discipline, had been found highly useful in checking pauperism, by enabling the directors to offer it to those whom they suspected not to be proper objects for relief. The surgeon receives a salary of 35 *l.* a year for attendance and medicine supplied to all the poor in the house, as well as to the resident poor belonging to the incorporated city parishes; but the contract does not extend to parishes beyond these limits. A physician attends the house gratis. The parish of St. Botolph has a few houses in which some widows and old people live rent free. But relief by the payment of rents is not practised in Lincoln, nor are any houses exempted from the rates; yet I was assured that the amount of rates excused or not recoverable, which I found in many places to be very considerable, does not in Lincoln average 30 *l.* a year; a strong proof of the condition of its poorer inhabitants.

Able-bodied pau-
pers.

The applications for relief from the able-bodied, I have already stated, are not frequent here; neither is any allowance, in addition to wages, ever made to persons in full employment. In some cases of large families, occasional relief is given in clothes; and an offer is made to receive some of the children into the house; but this proposal is not often accepted, and I found none within it under such circumstances. The only able-bodied persons there when I visited it were the mothers of illegitimate children, and two lads who

had been put out to service with farmers by the directors, but had been sent back for bad behaviour. These two were kept on shorter diet than the rest, and put to the most disagreeable and laborious work that could be found for them. When able-bodied men apply for relief, and their claim is admitted by the directors, they are employed in quarrying and breaking stones for the road, or in piece-work of some description. At one time, the directors contracted for the sweeping and cleansing of the streets, but from the difficulty of a proper superintendence, such employment had not the effect of inducing the paupers to seek work for themselves; therefore this source of employment has been abandoned. The old and infirm are relieved, either in or out of the house, at the discretion of the directors, who decide each case on its own merits, without attending to any fixed rule. The mothers of illegitimate children are generally taken into the house: in other respects, the maintenance of bastards and the treatment of the mother does not differ from the general practice of other places, but is open to the same objections, except that much expense is not incurred in seeking the putative fathers; since experience proved, that abiding by the first loss in such cases is the smallest loss in the end to the parish. The cost of bastards cannot be ascertained by an inspection of the accounts, as no distinct head has been provided for such disbursements; but, according to the statement of the clerk to the directors, the charges for illegitimate children during the last year are 300 *l.*, of which 25 *l.* had been received back from the fathers. Only one woman has been committed to prison for this offence, being for her second child, under circumstances of gross immorality.

The assessment I believe not to be very equal at Lincoln, although I heard no complaints against its fairness. All houses and lands are assessed; and the total amount uncollected, arising from the poverty of the rate-payers and empty houses together, does not amount to 5 per cent. on the collection, which loss arises almost entirely, as I was informed, from the number of empty houses kept on the rate-books. The 19th section of Mr. S. Bourne's Act, rendering owners rateable, is not acted upon here; but it appears to be a general opinion, both here and at most of the towns which I have visited, that if this clause was imperative and took a wider range, including all houses under 20 *l.* a year, it would prove highly beneficial in its effects. The amount paid under the head of casual poor is very small, not averaging for the 19 parishes incorporated above 11 *l.* a year during the last five years. The charges for vagrants have been much heavier, amounting in 1832 to 59 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 *d.*; but a great improvement in the police of the city has since taken place, by the appointment of street-keepers, on nearly the same principle as the new police in London, which measure has already decreased the expense under this head very considerably.

It will, I think, appear from what has been said, that the advantages derived at Lincoln from the incorporation under which the poor are managed, are very conspicuous; few, if any, of those evil practices common in other places of the same county ever prevail here. Rents are not paid out of the poor-rates; the allowance system is not practised; and roundsmen are not known: consequently, the poor-rate is very moderate, being about 1 *s.* in the pound upon the rack-rent; and the poorer classes are well-behaved and contented. I was repeatedly assured that these results were principally obtained through the instrumentality of a tolerably well regulated workhouse, and the system which it enabled the directors to act upon. The public charities at Lincoln are certainly very large, amounting to 1,035 *l.* a year, and may therefore have some effect in keeping down the poor-rates; but the far greater part of this sum is bestowed upon a class of persons not likely to become chargeable to the parishes; and after making every allowance on this head, the difference between Lincoln and Boston, the town next to it in point of consideration, upon which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, will be very striking. The sum paid in relief to the out-poor only in the latter place, whose population is 11,240, is more than three times the amount of the whole sum expended by the incorporated parishes of Lincoln on the maintenance of the poor, both in and out of the workhouse, with a population of 11,107.

I have annexed in the Appendix a transcript of the accounts of the Lincoln House of Industry, or, as I have termed it, the Lincoln Incorporation, for the year ending on the first Wednesday in June, being the year 1831-32; whence it will appear, that the actual expenditure on account of the poor, after making the necessary deductions, was 2,456 *l.* 10 *s.* 11 *d.*

From Lincoln I proceeded to Gainsborough.

The town of *Gainsborough* is situated upon the eastern banks of the River Trent, by which it is separated from Nottinghamshire. As the tide reaches this port, it is navigable for square-rigged vessels; and a considerable trade is carried on in agricultural produce, as well as in ship and boat building; besides which, it is the principal mart for the numerous articles of consumption in Lincolnshire, and in the several counties through which the Trent runs, either after they have been conveyed hither by the home trade, or after they have been imported to Hull from foreign countries.

The population of this town was in 1821, 5,893, and in 1831, 6,658, giving an increase of nearly 13 per cent. in 10 years. The annual value of real property was, by the Returns made in 1815, 18,903 *l.*; but the valuation, on which the poor assessment is now levied, amounts only to 16,500 *l.*, upon which sum the rates for the last three years have averaged 3 *s.* in the pound. The number of permanent paupers, being heads of families, relieved out of the house has been on an average, for the last three years, about 99. The number of non-residents average about 48, who cost the parish about 250 *l.* a year; 36 *l.* a year is paid for rents. The number in the workhouse average about 45. The total annual expenditure

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penditure has been about 2,827 l., the particulars of which will be found in the Appendix. There is an assistant overseer, whose salary is 70 l. a year. This parish has a workhouse, wherein discipline and separation of the sexes are well attended to; but the construction of the house will not admit of classification. The day-rooms are low and ill ventilated; there is no yard in which the children can take exercise, the centre being occupied by a little garden, which is the only land attached to this establishment. The house is kept quite clear: the provisions are very good in quality, and abundant in quantity: meat three times a week: beer brewed in the house, and supplied to paupers at dinner and supper: tobacco is also given by the parish to the aged. At a school in the house the children are taught to read and write by an old pauper. The clergyman of the parish attends every Thursday evening, gratis, to read prayers and to give religious instruction. The men and boys attend church or chapel twice on every Sunday. All the inmates, able to work, are employed in teasing oakum, and the women in spinning, and making and mending the apparel for the house.

Employment.

A cargo of stones was purchased some time since, for setting the out-poor to work on, in breaking them for the roads, when they were sold to the surveyor; but this experiment has not been repeated, in consequence of its having occasioned a pecuniary loss to the parish. The house will contain 120 persons. The present overseers informed me, that since they had held office they had resisted the payment of any money for the relief of vagrants; and that in consequence scarcely any such applications are now made. From the foregoing observations, as well as from a statement of the parochial accounts in the Appendix, it will be apparent that several items are admitted into the expenditure which are objectionable, and which should be abolished in all well-regulated parishes; yet, greater pains than usual have been bestowed by the temporary overseers, and the disbursements have been kept as low as perhaps they could have been, so long as paupers' rents are paid, and no sufficient means are taken to check the amount paid to non-resident poor, under which head great abuses are known to exist. The accounts are regularly audited and published every year, with the names of all persons receiving relief; and the amount received weekly by each, as well as the names of defaulters under orders of bastardy. I could not obtain the Population Returns for the number of labourers.

Grimsby, its situation and circumstances.

The next place to which I request your attention is *Great Grimsby*, a sea-port situated near the mouth of the Humber, on the north-eastern coast of Lincolnshire, which is a borough and a market-town; the parish containing in its area about 3,000 acres. Its rental, according to the Parliamentary Returns in 1815, is 5,825 l. Its population in 1821 was 3,064, and in 1831 was 4,225; being an increase of $37\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. in 10 years. Its trade is said to be on the decline, notwithstanding this great increase of population. The rates for the last seven years have averaged from 3s. 6d. to 4s. in the pound upon the rack-rent. There is no permanent overseer; the two appointed at Lady-day divide the year between them, each taking six months; but, as it scarcely ever happens that a person fills this office twice, they have not even the experience usual in other parishes, where overseers are appointed under the same circumstances, which may partly account for the bad management of the poor in this place.

Expenditure for the poor.

The total expenditure for the poor, for the year ending 25 March 1832, was 1,258 l. 1 s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The number of resident permanent paupers, for the same period, was 78; of non-resident permanent paupers, 14; of resident occasional paupers, 12; and of non-resident occasional paupers, 3. The average number of paupers in the workhouse has been, in winter 26, and in summer 20. There were 24 in when I visited it. On reference to the statement of accounts annexed in the Appendix, it will be perceived that they are not kept in a very intelligible form. The workhouse, a large building in bad repair, is calculated to accommodate from 80 to 90 adults, besides nearly as many children. It was erected about 25 years since by Great Grimsby only, and has about half an acre of ground attached to it. But the governor is allowed to contract for the poor of several other parishes; six parishes besides Grimsby had paupers in the house when I visited it. Neither the governor nor overseers could inform me what other places were entitled to send hither their poor. Those who have availed themselves of it are Clee, Broklesby, Great Coats, Holton, Ludborough and Barnoldsby. Although the poor-rates are not so high at Grimsby as at some few other places which I have visited in the course of my duty, yet I consider the system adopted here for the management of the poor, or rather the want of any system, and the state of the workhouse, to be worse by far than that in any other part of Lincolnshire within my knowledge.

Workhouse.

Mismanagement in and out of the workhouse.

The rents of about 40 houses are paid by the parish. Wages are virtually made up, in many instances, from the rates; and, in short, relief is afforded to the poor under all the most objectionable forms adopted in other parts of England, except roundsmen. The governor of the workhouse contracts with Grimsby, and the other parishes who send their poor there, to feed and clothe the inmates for 3s. a head, at all ages from the birth; he having the benefit of the work of all those able to earn anything towards their support. The person who at present fills this office, is an elderly single man, of irregular and dirty habits; and, from want of attention on the part of the parochial authorities, not the slightest attention is paid to either classification, discipline, cleanliness, or even to separation of the sexes. I found the whole house in a filthy condition, with all the paupers huddled together in the kitchen over the fire; the lodging rooms ill-ventilated, each pauper keeping the key of the room in which himself and his family slept. Egress and ingress to the house

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house free to all. The inmates full of complaints respecting their treatment, either by the governor or the parish. One termagant woman proclaimed, at the top of her voice, that the parish had forced her in, with her four children, sooner than allow her 4 s. a week while her husband was at sea. Another inmate was an unfortunate idiot lad, of about 19 or 20. I was shown the sleeping-place of this poor wretch, in an out-house in the yard, with a very damp brick floor, half of which he had pulled up; his bed a heap of filthy litter, with a miserable rug full of holes for covering; his clothing, though in the middle of winter, consisted of nothing but a long shirt made of sacking, and a leather strap with a chain fastened to the wall was in the corner to make him fast to when he was unruly. The whole presented a spectacle alike disgraceful to a civilized country and to the parish where it exists; nor can I help adding, to the magistracy of the district, as this is an associated workhouse, under 9 Geo. 1, and the clause of 30 Geo. 3, c. 49, gives them power to prevent the existence of such a state of things as I have here described. No care is taken by the parish for the education of the children in this workhouse: they are neither taught in the house, nor obliged to attend any of the three schools in the town, of which there are two supported by voluntary subscription, and one by the corporation for the children of free-men. A dissenting minister attends the house occasionally on a Sunday evening, and the paupers are allowed to go to church if they choose, which is the only attention that is paid to their religious instruction. The medical man receives 16*l.* a year for attendance and medicines supplied to all the poor in and out of the house.

The present and late overseers stated that they were aware of the bad state of the parish, but offered as an excuse that they were all retail tradesmen, and dependent on the lower orders for the principal part of their custom; and that, as they were totally unsupported by the authorities or the respectable part of the community, it might prove their ruin if they acted so as to acquire a character for harshness in the administration of the poor laws.

Inefficiency of
overseers.

On proceeding from Grimsby towards the south-west, the next town of importance is *Louth*, a market town, at which a considerable trade is carried on, principally by means of the canal connecting it with the Humber.

Louth.

The area of the parish is 2,467 acres. That part of the parish not occupied by the town is either arable or pasture, mostly the latter. The population in 1821 was 6,012, and in 1831, 6927; the increase being about 15 per cent. in the 10 years. The annual value of real property returned to Parliament in 1815 was 16,497*l.*, but the valuation of the parish upon which the present assessments are levied was taken in 1823. The amount of this valuation is 10,943*l.*, and is intended to represent half of the full annual value of the land, and one-third of that of the houses. The rates for the last three years have averaged 6 s. 1 d. in the pound upon this valuation, or nearly 3 s. in the pound upon the rackrent, collected in three rates. A select vestry has existed for some years in this parish, and is supposed to have been beneficial to its interests. It consists of seven, three forming a quorum; the two overseers and two churchwardens for the current year are *ex-officio* members, to whom one of the overseers for the past year is always added. The number of heads of families receiving regular relief, or the permanent resident paupers at present, are 144 in number, which has been about the average number for the last three years. These, with their families, make 262 persons. This is the only parish in Lincolnshire that I visited where I found a correct register kept of the number and age of each person in the families of those receiving relief. The number of occasional paupers I could not obtain correctly; but the statement of accounts annexed will show that the number must be very large, the sum expended under this head having averaged above 700*l.* a year for the same period. The total sum expended on the poor has averaged about 3,162*l.* 8 s. 8 d. a year for the last three years, being rather more than 9 s. a head on the population.

Its situation and
circumstances.

Select vestry.

Paupers relieved.

The poor in the workhouse are maintained by contract with the master at 2 s. 6 d. a head from a month old, he taking the benefit of the labour of such as are able to work; the parish clothes them. This workhouse is very ill adapted to the purpose, not admitting of proper separation or classification; nor is anything of the kind attempted, or any restraint on the free egress or ingress of the paupers during the day. There were 39 persons in the house when I visited it, principally aged and infirm. There was one stout young woman in, who had been put out to service by the overseers, but had left her place, it was believed, at the instigation of the master of the workhouse, who wanted her services as a servant in the house. I found two instances at Horncastle of the same abuse, arising out of this bad system*. The master allows the pauper 1 d. or 2 d. in the shilling of their earnings. This house, or any other where the poor are farmed, is totally useless to the parish in checking the applications for relief, as it is never offered as an alternative to the applicants.

Workhouse.

The parish subscribes 20*l.* a year to a dispensary established in the town, for which sum all the poor are supplied with medicines under the direction of the medical man, who is paid by the case for his attendance. This is not the most economical plan for the parish, but is more satisfactory to the poor than the usual plan of contracting for both attendance and medicines at a fixed sum, which is frequently so small, that it is impossible

Medical dispen-
sary.

adequate

* This condemnation of the system of contracting for the maintenance of the poor only applies to agricultural parishes and small towns.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major *W. Wylde*,
R. A.Benevolent insti-
tutions.

adequate attention should be paid to the sick poor or proper medicines supplied. I may instance Grimsby, as an example, where the sum paid for attendance and medicines is only 16 *l.*, with a population of 4,225; and in several small agricultural villages I found the sum equally small in proportion to their population. There would appear to be less excuse for the large amount of the poor-rates at Louth than in most places, from its possessing several institutions intended for the benefit of the poorer classes, promoted by some actively benevolent and influential individuals residing in the town. I have already alluded to the dispensary. There is also a well-managed friendly society, and several other institutions, namely, a benevolent society, for relief in sickness; the Dorcas Society, for providing clothes to the poor, and several friendly societies on the old system; another has been lately introduced, called "The Louth Provident Society," which owes its foundation to Mr. W. G. Allinson. This society is founded upon the principle of granting assistance to those of the poor only who are willing and endeavour to assist themselves. For this purpose it receives from its poor subscribers to the rent assurance fund; for example, so much a week, the society adding 1 *s.* in the pound to the sum so subscribed by way of bonus. There are also cow, garden, coal and soup funds, conducted on the same principles as the rent fund. The garden fund appears to have met with most success: all the land at first rented by the society has been eagerly taken by the poor, and the rents regularly paid according to the rules of the society, by weekly instalments, during the 20 summer weeks, when employment is most easily obtained. If all the charitable institutions were conducted on these principles, and if this parish had the aid of a well-regulated workhouse to operate as a check upon pauperism, I have little doubt but that this town would soon cease to be an example of that anomaly which it now exhibits, in common with many other places, of the poor-rates being higher, and the state of the lower orders most distressed, where the largest sums are distributed in charity.

Horncastle; its cir-
cumstances and
population.

Horncastle, which is situated to the south of Louth, is the next place demanding attention. It is a market town, connected by a canal with the river Witham. The population was in 1821, 3,058, and in 1831, 3,988, the increase in 10 years being rather more than 30 per cent. The parish contains 2,011 acres, and the rental by the Parliamentary Return of 1815 was 9,896 *l.* The valuation upon which the present rates are levied is 6,200 *l.*, which is supposed to represent rather less than half the rackrent of houses, and somewhat more than half that of land. I was informed that it might be safely taken, therefore, as about on an average half the real annual value of the two combined, upon which supposition the following calculations are made. The rates for the last three years have averaged about 4 *s.* 6 *d.* in the pound upon the real or rackrent, or about 13 *s.* 6 *d.* a head upon the population. From the above it is evident that the poor's-rate is high at *Horncastle*, compared with other towns; and the annexed statement of the parish accounts, in Appendix, will show the heads of expenditure for 1831-32, which has been an average year, are open to the same objections as in most of the other towns in this county, namely, rents to a large amount are paid by the parish for 32 cottages, the overseer having been in the habit of becoming responsible for them to the landlords. Thus are speculations in this class of houses encouraged, which has had the effect of inducing the labourers from the surrounding country to reside in *Horncastle*. This, I was told, was so much the case, that many had to go two or three miles to their work daily. Of late, this practice of the overseers becoming responsible for the rent was less common, in consequence of the sum it had amounted to the year before last. But the parish is now building cottages for the poor to live in rent-free, thus perpetuating a bad system, by running from one error into another. The sum of 206 *l.* 16 *s.* 6 *d.* was expended in the last year in building cottages for this purpose. The proportion of the assessment not recovered is also greater here than in most places, amounting to more than 11 per cent. on the whole. The average number of permanent paupers for the last three years has been 88 resident, 42 non-resident, total 130; and I found, by examination of the parish book, that they averaged about four persons to a family, making therefore 520 persons in all, besides 20 in the workhouse. The number of occasional paupers I could not ascertain, from the manner in which the books were kept. *Horncastle* has a permanent assistant-overseer, with a salary of 50 *l.* a year; but he is not allowed to give or withhold relief without the sanction of the overseers, of whom there are two appointed annually, who are never called upon to serve a second time; in fact, he is merely their agent for the collection and distribution of the rates.

Expenditure for
the poor.

Medical attendance.

The fixed sum of 10 *l.* a year is paid for the medical attendance and medicines for the poor in the workhouse. For the out-poor the medical man is paid by the case, and the expense to the parish has been about 70 *l.* a year for the last three years, besides the 10 *l.* for workhouse. Each of the principal practitioners takes it in turn to attend the poor on these terms for a year. The number of able-bodied labourers usually out of employ, and consequently on the parish, is 14 or 15. These are employed by the parish in digging and screening gravel; the wages paid for this work is 1 *s.* a day to a single man, 1 *s.* 6 *d.* to 1 *s.* 8 *d.* and 2 *s.* a day to a married man, according to his family. £85. 13 *s.* is charged in the accounts for 1831-32 under this head. A custom also exists of giving tickets on the tradesmen for articles of clothing; and great abuses have formerly taken place in consequence of the tradesmen supplying the paupers who brought such orders with damaged goods, which they had no other means of selling, and charging the parish full price for them.

Able-bodied pau-
pers.

Poor farmed.

As at most other places in Lincolnshire, the poor in the workhouse are farmed to the master or governor, who contracts with the parish for their maintenance at 2 *s.* 9 *d.* a head from

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from a month old. The parish clothe them on first going into the house; they are afterwards clothed by the master of the house out of the 2s. 9d., the contract price for maintenance and clothing. He receives 30*l.* a year salary, and 14 chaldrons of coals, besides also the benefit of their work. There were two stout healthy young women in this house, when I visited it, under the same circumstances as at Louth, to perform the domestic work, the parish paying 2s. 9d. a week for each of them. The house belongs to the parish, and has been built many years. It is ill adapted for the purpose, not affording the means of separation, classification or discipline, and is badly situated. The overseers accounted for the largeness of the sum expended on the poor as having been caused in a great measure by the number of small tenements that a late lord of the manor, Sir Joseph Banks, had permitted to be erected on some waste land adjoining the town, which were occupied by the labourers of the adjoining parishes, many of whom, or their children, had since obtained settlements in Horncastle.

Tattershall is situated eight miles south-south-west of Horncastle; it is a small market town, standing about a mile from the left bank of the Witham, and is entirely surrounded by an agricultural district, in the cultivation of which, and in the handicraft trades connected with agriculture, consists the occupation of its inhabitants. A large proportion of the parish is the property of one landlord, Lord Forrester. The farms are in general small, the greater number being under 100 acres, and many under 50.

Tattershall; its
situation and cir-
cumstances.

The area of the parish is 1,612 acres, of which about 40 acres are wood, all the rest arable or pasture, principally arable; no common or waste land. The population in 1821 was 627, and in 1831, 599; the decrease in 10 years being nearly five per cent. The rental in 1815 was, by the Parliamentary Returns, 3,622*l.*; but by a valuation made in 1819, the annual value of the land was stated to be 2,437*l.*, and that of houses 550*l.*; total, 2,987*l.* The rates are now levied upon 1,768*l.* 10s., this sum being intended to represent one half of the real annual value of the land and the whole of the real annual value of the houses; but the value of land is said to have fallen so much in this parish, that it may be reckoned as raised upon two-thirds of the value of the land at least. No Return was made by this parish to Parliament of the amount of the poor-rate in 1829; but in 1828 it is stated to be 531*l.* The sum raised in 1831-32 was 843*l.*, being 10s. 3d. in the pound upon the valuation on which the rate is raised, namely, 1,768*l.* 10s., including the county-rate; and in the first quarter, from 25th March to 25th June 1832, 202*l.* was actually paid in relief to the out-poor, and for the clothing distributed in the year preceding. The accounts are kept in so confused a manner that it is not easy to separate them under different heads; but I made out, from my inspection, that the sum expended in the year 1831-32 was upwards of 750*l.* for relief and maintenance of the poor only, being at the rate of 1*l.* 5s. a head on the population, and of 5s. in the pound upon the rental, and of nearly 10s. an acre on the land, the average rent for which is about 1*l.* 10s. an acre.

Area of population
and assessment.

Accounts.

There is a select vestry in the parish, composed of twenty members, but only two or three members usually attend the meetings, which are held once a fortnight. Two overseers and one churchwarden are appointed annually, one of the overseers of the preceding year being usually re-elected, but he takes no active part in the second year. There is no assistant-overseer; they had one, whose salary was 35*l.* a-year, but the two last persons who held the office turned out ill, therefore the parish have not appointed a successor.

Select vestry.

The accounts are kept without system: all the items of expense are entered in the same book, without being separated under different heads. The workhouse is hired by the parish, at a rent of 6*l.* 4s. per annum, and a master or governor put into it, with whom the parish contracts for the maintenance of the poor sent thither at 3s. a-head per week for all above a month old; the parish clothes them. There is only a small garden attached to the house. The hamlet of Thorpe, and the parishes of Turnby and Dugdyke also send their poor to this house, on the same terms, except that they pay to *Tattershall* 5*l.* a-year each for permission to do so. Relief is frequently granted in this parish by giving an order on a shopkeeper in the town for 2s. or 3s. a week to poor widows and others, the tradesman preferring to pay his rates in this way, with the hope that the whole or the greater part of this sum may be taken out in goods.

Workhouse.

By the Population Returns for 1831, it appears that the total number of labourers in this parish, agricultural and others, is 38, and the number of able-bodied men now receiving relief is 25, or about two-thirds of the whole number*.

Number of labour-
ers.

Coningsby adjoins *Tattershall*. Its area contains about 6,000 square acres; its population in 1821 was 1,651, and in 1831, 1,773; the rate of increase being about seven per cent. in the last 10 years.

Coningsby; its
situation and its
circumstances.

The rental returned to Parliament in 1815 was 6,541*l.*; but the value of land in the parish has fallen so much, that one quarter ought to be deducted from this sum in estimating the present rental; indeed, I was assured that it did not amount now to 5,000*l.* a-year. The rates may therefore be stated to average 8s. in the pound upon the rackrent of land, and

Rental and rates.

* The overseer mentioned to me the case of a labourer belonging to this parish, and living in the village, which affords a striking illustration of the effects of the allowance system, which is in full operation in this parish.

Appendix (A.)	and something less on that of the houses in the village, to which no land, or but little, is attached. The sum expended solely for the maintenance of the poor in the year ending 25 March 1832 amounted to 1,870 <i>l.</i> 7 <i>s.</i> , which is about 1 <i>l.</i> 1 <i>s.</i> a head per annum on the population in 1831. The sum of 45 <i>l.</i> a-year, arising from charitable bequests, is also distributed annually among the poor, by giving 20 <i>l.</i> to poor widows, 20 <i>l.</i> in clothing to poor men, and 5 <i>l.</i> in bread.
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Parish officers.	The rates have continued nearly the same for the last ten years. Two churchwardens are appointed annually and two overseers; one of the latter is permanent, with a salary of 50 <i>l.</i> a year. The parish accounts are regularly kept, but not under distinct heads, so as to be intelligible on inspection to one not intimately acquainted with the parish system of administering relief to paupers. It was evident, however, that, up to the commencement of 1833, relief had been afforded under all the most objectionable forms, such as making up wages out of the rates, payment of rents, and roundsmen, as well as by the ticket system, which consists in giving applicants for relief an order upon some shopkeeper for the amount of the allowance granted by the parish, varying from 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> to 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> a week. Such sum, or by far the greater part of it, the poor are expected to spend in the shop; grocers, drapers or chandlers being usually the class of tradesmen to whom these orders are directed.
Accounts.	
Relief.	
Number of paupers.	The number of persons receiving permanent relief in this parish for themselves and families averages about 30, besides 15 in the workhouse.
Cottages.	Eight cottages are occupied rent-free, and above 200 <i>l.</i> a year is paid for the rent of others; occasional relief is also frequently given in coals, clothing and other necessities.
Select vestry.	In short, the expenditure has been uncontrolled for a series of years. There has been a select vestry, but it was not attended by its members, so that the parish business has been altogether neglected.
Emigration.	In June 1830, six large families, amounting in the whole to 49 persons, emigrated to the United States of America, at the expense of the parish. One such family, consisting of six persons and an orphan boy, have returned to Coningsby, and become again chargeable to the parish; still the parish officers affirmed that the speculation had answered extremely well to the parish, even if all the families were to return this year, since more than the sum of 275 <i>l.</i> , which it cost the parish to send them out, would have been paid to the same persons in relief had they remained in Coningsby. A labour-rate of 1 <i>s.</i> in the pound upon all persons rated at 12 <i>l.</i> and upwards had been agreed upon, and was just coming into operation when I visited Coningsby; but the overseers informed me that it was not very popular with the small farmers, of whom several had refused to receive their quota of labourers. About 15 able-bodied labourers are generally out of employ, who must be provided for either by this rate or otherwise, and entirely supported by the parish except in harvest-time. I found this system much in favour with most of the overseers of agricultural parishes in Lincolnshire, and I have no doubt that it would become very general throughout the county but for the 6th clause of the Act 2 & 3 Gul. 4, c. 96, which restricts its application to parishes where the poor-rates are above 5 <i>s.</i> in the pound upon the rack-rent.
Labour-rate.	
Gardens.	About five acres were divided into gardens of three quarters of a rood each, and let out to 27 labourers and small tradesmen in the spring of 1832, at 7 <i>s.</i> a garden, rate-free; which had answered tolerably well, and it was thought would be the means of keeping some of the occupiers from the parish books.
Workhouse.	There is a workhouse for the parish of Coningsby only, which will hold about 30 persons of all ages; when I visited it the house contained 15 paupers, infirm or children. The parish contracts with the governor for the food and maintenance of the inmates at 3 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> a head after the age of one month. The governor takes the earnings of such as are able to work, except 2 <i>d.</i> in the shilling, which is allowed the pauper. The parish clothes them on their admission into the house, but the governor clothes them afterwards. By the contract the parish is obliged to pay the governor for 12 persons, whether that number be in the house or not. The house is clean, but without even an attempt at classification, separation, discipline or education. The children that are old enough are sent to one of the three Sunday-schools in the village supported by subscription, one by the Established Church, one by the Methodists, and one by the Baptists. About half an acre of garden is attached to the house. The medical man receives 40 <i>l.</i> a year for attendance and medicines for all paupers, including casual poor of other parishes. The nearest petty sessions are held at Horncastle, six miles distant. The scale of weekly relief fixed by the magistrates attending these sessions was 1 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> a head for a family, or 6 <i>s.</i> for a man and his wife without children, the parish paying also their rent. I was told that the parish officers never refused relief according to this scale, as the magistrates would interfere in favour of the pauper if they did, and the parish would be put to the additional expense of the overseer's attendance and loss of time at the petty sessions.
Area, and proportion of labourers.	The parish contains about 6,000 acres. The farms in general are small, varying from as low as five or six acres to 50 or 70; very few exceed 100 acres, and only one contains 300 acres. The land lets from 20 <i>s.</i> to 30 <i>s.</i> an acre, and the rent is said to be tolerably well paid. Sir G. Heathcote and Mr. Berchem are the principal landowners. I was told by the permanent overseer that the number of able-bodied labourers constantly out of employ

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employ was in a great measure to be attributed to the small farmers not having capital enough to cultivate their land properly, so that but few of them employed labourers, but cultivated their farms themselves with the assistance of their families. By the Population Returns for 1831, I find that there are 59 males returned as belonging to the second class of occupiers, or those who do not employ labourers, and 151 labourers in agriculture; total 210; which, supposing the area of the parish to have been correctly stated at 6,000 acres, gives exactly $3\frac{1}{2}$ labourers to every 100 acres, being not more than the usual number requisite for the proper cultivation of the soil; therefore this parish cannot, I apprehend, be suffering from a redundant agricultural population. Indeed, the parish accounts of themselves show that relief is afforded to the applicants with a lavish hand; and the overseer told me that their paupers were far better provided for than those of any other parish in the neighbourhood, and better than they should be, but he did not know how the present evils were to be avoided under the existing system.

Boston is the next subject for consideration. It is a sea-port, a market town, and a borough. In addition to the town, the parish contains about 4,000 acres, nearly half being arable and the rest in pasture. A small manufactory of woad for dyeing has been established close to the town, which is the only one of any kind in the neighbourhood. Boston; its situation and circumstances.

The population in 1821 was 10,373, and in 1831, 11,240; the rate of increase in these 10 years being about 8 per cent. The rental, by the Parliamentary Return in 1815, was 30,423*l.* The amount of the poor's-rate, according to the Returns to Parliament in 1821, was 4,582*l.*, and in 1831, from the same authority, 5,192*l.*; the rate of increase being above 13 per cent. But I am inclined to doubt the accuracy of these returns; for, on examining the parish accounts of the year ending 25th March 1832, I found that 5,720*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.* had been expended in actual relief upon 835 paupers, exclusive of the charge for those in the workhouse, and several other items which should be properly contained in the sum expended for the maintenance of the poor during each year, which the above extracts from the Parliamentary Returns are supposed to give. Moreover, from my inquiries on the spot, I am led to believe that the increase of expenditure in 1832 was not so great as the above extracts show; for if to the 5,720*l.* given in actual relief, 500*l.* be added for the workhouse only, and 100*l.* for removals, funerals, &c., the total cost for the maintenance of the poor in last year would amount to 6,320*l.*, an increase on the year before of nearly 22 per cent., which I do not apprehend has been the case. The rates are levied upon one-third of the rackrent of houses and two-fifths of the rent of land. Last year they amounted to 13*s.* in the pound upon that proportion, it having required an extra shilling rate to pay the expense of a law-suit for the recovery of some marsh land supposed to belong to the parish; 12*s.* is the usual amount collected annually, in four rates. The total sum assessed under the head of poor-rate was 9,091*l.*, but only 7,708*l.* was raised; the deficiency arose from empty houses assessed, and from the inability of the poorer classes to pay their rates; 411*l.* was lost under the former head and 972*l.* under the latter. Population, rental and poor-rate.

There are three churchwardens and four overseers, chosen annually, as well as an assistant-overseer, whose salary is 100*l.* a year, and a collector with a salary of 50*l.* a year. This last officer is necessary, as parts of the parish lie in detached portions, some of which are situated nine miles from the town of Boston. Officers.

The accounts are not kept in such a form as to render it easy to ascertain the expenditure under each head, neither are they published annually. There is no select vestry, and the open vestry seldom meets in consequence of the political spirit existing in the town, which renders the meetings scenes of discord and dispute. Accounts.

The number of paupers in 1831-32 was as follows:

Resident permanent paupers	-	-	-	-	301
Resident occasional paupers	-	-	-	-	70
Non-resident permanent paupers	-	-	-	-	410
Non-resident occasional paupers	-	-	-	-	54
					835
In workhouse, including children	-	-	-	-	78
Total	-	-	-	-	913

Number of paupers.

The number of women and children belonging to paupers out of the house the overseer could not furnish me with; and the above has been about the average number for the last three years.

The number of able-bodied relieved I could not obtain; but on the evening that I attended the assistant-overseer's pay-table several of that description applied for relief, which was granted. Two of these cases I shall select as examples. The first was a healthy man about 40 years of age, with seven children, two of whom were out at service and earned their own livelihood, the other five, aged ten, nine, seven, five and three, were at home with him. He rented a house with two acres of land for 9*l.* 16*s.* a year, including taxes. On the land he had raised a tolerable crop of barley last year. He had also been

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out harvesting himself, but complained that it had not been so profitable as usual, owing to the commencement of the wet weather before the farmers began to get in their corn in this part of the county. He received 5s. from the overseer, and had received as much, one week with another, for the last 12 months. He said if the parish would advance the capital necessary for enabling him to cultivate four or five acres, in addition to what he had, he thought perhaps he should be able to do without further help. The second was a man with a wife and six children under 12 years of age. He had lately been working at piece-work, thrashing oats, for which he was paid by his employer 8s. a last, and he could not thrash and dress more than one last in a week; he therefore expected the parish to make up his wages to a sum adequate for the support of himself and family, and received 3s. This exhibits a proof of the effect which the custom of making up wages out of the poor's-rate produces upon the price of labour. Had this man been residing at Southwell, where no such practice exists, he would have been paid 13s. for the same quantity of work that he had received only 8s. for at Boston.

Irish labourers.

In 1831 a great many Irish labourers came in harvest-time seeking employment, but the native labourers assembled in great numbers and drove them away by force. In fact, such tumults took place that the military were called in.

Bastards.

There are 94 bastard children now chargeable to the parish, whose mothers are paid 2s. a week, if nothing is received from the fathers; if less than 2s. a week is received from the father, the difference is made up by the parish to that sum; and if more, it is all paid to the woman. The cost under this head to the parish has averaged 400l. a year for the last three years. Only one woman has been punished for this offence during the last 10 years, and this was for a second child under peculiar circumstances.

Workhouse.

The workhouse has been established many years, and in 1828 was considerably enlarged; the parish paid 1,200l. for this purpose. The alterations, however, have not afforded any better means of separating the sexes, or of classification, than had previously existed. The house is ill-adapted to the purpose for which it is intended. The inmates are farmed by the parish to the master, who receives 3s. a head for all ages from birth; he has 34 chaldrons of coals, and occupies, rent-free, four and a half acres of land, for which the parish pay 18l. a year; besides which, he takes the benefit of the labour of the paupers in the house. The parish clothes them for the first three months, after which the master supplies them with clothing, without any additional charge to the parish. There were 78 paupers in the house when I visited it, of whom only two men and two women were able-bodied. One of these women had lately been brought to bed of a bastard child in the house. The diet was ample in quantity and good in quality. Meat twice a week, and beer allowed every day. The house was tolerably clean; but, in other respects, open to the same objections as all those in this county where the poor are farmed, arising from the want of systematic management.

Law expenses.

The law expenses average about 56l. a year. Last year they amounted to 400l., for the reasons before stated.

Employment.

The assistant-overseer assured me that it was impossible for him to find employment for the number of able-bodied poor out of work to whom he was giving parish relief, as there was no stone or gravel to be found in the neighbourhood. Indeed, he seemed to dread the idea of any enactment prohibiting relief, except in work, from the extra trouble it would cause him.

Comparison of
Boston with Lin-
coln.

I regret that, from the manner in which the parish accounts are kept, it is not in my power to compare them with those of the 19 parishes incorporated at Lincoln, by presenting the expenditure under the same heads, as the contrast would appear very striking; the total sum expended at Lincoln in the year ending June 1832 being 2,481l., whilst at Boston the out-poor alone cost 5,720l., and the workhouse 600l.; total, 6,320l. Yet the population is very nearly the same; indeed, that of Lincoln is rather more than Boston. The number of persons receiving relief as heads of families at Lincoln, in and out of the workhouse, was 392, and at Boston 905; yet I could not ascertain that any cause existed for this difference beyond good and bad management. There is no manufactory in either place to cause fluctuations in the demand for labour; and Boston, from being on the coast, has a much more active trade than Lincoln, a great deal of which is of a nature calculated to supply constant employment for the lower orders; such, for instance, as loading corn for exportation coastwise, fishing, malting, and other employments existing in sea-port towns, as an addition to the ordinary sources of manual labour.

Stamford.

Proceeding from Boston towards the south, the next place of importance is *Stamford*.

Its situation and
circumstances.

Stamford is a borough and market town, situated at the southern extremity of Lincolnshire, upon the river Welland, on the borders of Northamptonshire and Rutlandshire. The trade of this town consists principally in corn, malt and freestone, for which a conveyance by water is supplied by the navigation of the river Welland.

Population and
rental.

The population and the rental of Stamford, together with St. Martin's, Stamford Baron, may be thus stated:—

POPULATION.

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	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831	Rental in 1815.	Expenditure of Poor in 1831.
					£.	£.
All Saints - - - -	1,131	1,114	1,388	1,769	3,559	671
St. George's - - - -	877	867	1,191	1,410	2,073	528
St. John - - - -	765	844	1,003	1,109	1,340	400
St. Mary - - - -	383	600	357	365	1,140	163
St. Michael - - - -	866	1,157	1,111	1,184	2,587	683
	4,022	4,582	5,050	5,837	10,699	2,445
* St. Martin's, Stamford Baron	1,033	937	1,190	1,222	—	—
TOTAL - - - -	5,055	5,519	6,240	7,059	—	—

Expenditure on account of the Poor, according to the Parliamentary Returns, by the Parishes in the Town of Stamford. Expenditure for the poor.

YEARS.	All Saints.	St. George's.	St. John's.	St. Mary's.	St. Michael.	TOTAL.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
1816	500	454	384	342	365	2,045
1817	650	552	487	436	402	2,527
1818	723	482	505	410	459	2,570
1819	634	542	369	491	547	2,483
1820	753	715	391	425	593	2,877
1821	585	692	487	371	621	2,756
1822	662	582	443	313	559	2,559
1823	579	496	468	197	524	2,264
1824	588	520	594	195	463	2,360
1825	595	473	574	176	467	2,285
1826	812	508	435	163	506	2,424
1827	766	562	522	216	585	2,651
1828	684	513	529	354	535	2,615
1829	624	486	505	248	423	2,286
1830	697	484	454	213	475	2,323
1831	671	528	400	163	683	2,445

The sum expended on the poor in 1830-31 in these five town parishes amounts to rather more than 8 s. a head on the population. The increase of population from 1821 to 1831 has been about 15 ½ per cent.; the decrease in the sum expended on account of the poor during the same period has been nearly 13 per cent. But as the years 1820 and 1821 appear by the returns to have been unusually high, perhaps the mean of three years, from 1823 to 1825, and from 1829 to 1831, will afford a fairer criterion. By this test there appears to have been a small increase of about 2 ½ per cent. Since 1816 the increase has been about 20 per cent. The number of poor relieved annually under the following heads, on an average of three years, ending Easter 1815, is stated in Marshall's Statistics to have been as follows:

Number of Families relieved in 1815 ;						
Out of workhouse -	-	-	-	-	-	148
In workhouse -	-	-	-	-	-	22
Occasionally -	-	-	-	-	-	59
						229

Number

* Part of St. Martin's, Stamford Baron, forms a suburb of Stamford, but another part of the parish stretches for some distance into the country, and is purely agricultural; it is situated in Northamptonshire, being separated from Stamford by the Welland River. Woolthorpe, which is a hamlet of St. Martin's, has no connexion with Stamford.

Appendix (A.)

Number of Families relieved in 1831-32 ;

Reports.
Major W. Wylde,
R. A.

Out of workhouse	-	-	-	-	-	217*
In workhouse	-	-	-	-	-	38*
Occasionally	-	-	-	-	-	43
						298

System of admini-
stration.

Allowance system.

Workhouses.

All Saints.

Expenditure for the
poor.

Select vestry.

Non-interference of
magistrates.

Proportions of
rates.

General application
of remarks.

Infirmary.

The details of each parish in the management of the poor, as far as I have been able to collect them, are so closely allied, and the system of administration practised in the several parishes is so similar, that the following account of the parish of All Saints may be considered as applicable to each of the other parishes, since no peculiar feature presents itself in any of their parochial concerns demanding a special and separate explanation. They have all fallen into the prevalent error of allowing relief, with little discrimination, to the able-bodied. The parish authorities, when asked the question, usually denied that the practice of making up wages out of the rates existed. However, on a closer examination, I was satisfied that it actually does exist to a considerable extent, as many persons in full work receive assistance in one shape or other from the parish, either by having their rent paid or their rates excused. The amount expended on the poor in proportion to the population, which I have already stated as being about 8s. a head, in a place where no peculiar cause for pauperism occurs, amounts, in my opinion, to a proof of a mal-administration, or at least of a lax administration, of the poor laws, as I have never found that the expenditure reaches nearly this sum in any of the districts I have visited where the law has been tolerably administered. All the parishes have workhouses, or rather poor-houses, of their own, except All Saints, which joins with St. Mary's. In each of these the poor are maintained by contract, on the usual terms of 3s. 6d. or 3s. weekly per head. The houses are upon a small scale, without suitable means of separation or a sufficient quantity of land; consequently no attempt is made to enforce classification or discipline in any of them; neither did I find any provision for religious instruction or education. There are no parochial schools; there is a public school, called Wells's, to which most of the parishes send the children of paupers, but it derives no contributions from the parochial funds.

The largest parish is *All Saints*, which contains about 1,200 acres, besides the part built upon. Its rental, which in 1815 was 3,559 l., is now stated to be about 5,000 l. The rates are raised upon a proportion of about one-third of this valuation, or rather more; and are levied in the same proportion, or nearly so, for land and houses. There have been 11 twelpenny rates annually for the last three years, which have raised as follows: in 1829-30, 1,074 l.; in 1830-31, 1,070 l.; and in 1831-32, 1,139 l., including county-rates.

The money expended on the poor in the same years was, respectively, 697 l., 672 l. and 701 l.; which sums agree more nearly with the Parliamentary Returns for those periods than I have generally found to be the case on a personal examination of the parish accounts; since it is the custom in some parishes to insert many items, which, I conceive, should not be reckoned as a portion of the expenditure on the poor; while, in others, many particulars are omitted which ought to be included.

A select vestry has been established, which it is stated has improved the system in the parish, though it is not very regularly attended. Two overseers and two churchwardens are chosen annually. A permanent overseer was formerly appointed, but such officer has been discontinued for the last two years.

The magistrates do not interfere with parish officers; or, when they do, the workhouse is offered to the applicant, which always put an end to such interference. The scale of relief is regulated according to the number of families.

The proportion which the rates bear to the real value of the houses I found it impossible to ascertain, either in this or any of the other parishes. Indeed, the rents of houses held under Lord Exeter are so low, that I found instances of the rates being equal to the rent. In others, the rates did not exceed 2s. in the pound; but perhaps 4s. 6d. or 5s. in the pound may be taken as a fair average.

These observations upon the parish of All Saints may be considered as equally representing the state of the poor and the parochial management in the parishes of St. George, St. John, St. Mary and St. Michael, constituting the town of Stamford, as well as in that portion of the parish of St. Martin's, Stamford Baron, which forms part of the town of Stamford. There is an almshouse for about 12 poor men.

But the principal institution for the benefit of the poor is the general infirmary, which was erected in the year 1823, partly with the funds arising from the bequest of Mr. Fryer, and partly from private donations. The sick poor of Stamford are generally sent to this establishment from all the parishes.

Having

* The number of wives and families of the permanent paupers in 1831-32 was, wives, 38, children, 165; making the total of persons receiving relief 501, or about one in every 12 of the population.

Having now continued my remarks to the southern extremity of this county, it only remains to return towards the north, upon its western boundary, so as to complete the objects of my inquiry.

At the distance of 21 miles north of Stamford, in passing along the great north road, you arrive at *Grantham*. The parish of Grantham contains the whole of the town of Grantham, except such parts as are situated in the hamlets of Manthorpe-cum-Little Gonerby and Spittlegate. These hamlets are partly agricultural, and support their own poor. The following Report therefore relates only to this parish, exclusive of its hamlets, except where such incidental mention is made of them as any difference in the management of their poor may require. The population of Grantham, exclusive of the hamlets, was, in 1821, 4,148; and in 1831, 4,590; the increase being rather more than 10 per cent. The sum expended for the maintenance of the poor, according to the Parliamentary Returns, was, in 1821, 2,810*l.*, and in 1831, 2,154*l.*; but the year 1821 was unusually high. I have therefore extracted from the Parliamentary documents the expenditure from 1816, and stated them in the margin*; by which it will be seen that the increase in the first five years, from 1816 to 1821, was nearly 78 per cent., and that subsequently, from 1821 to 1831, they have gradually decreased from 2,810*l.* to 2,154*l.*, or about 30 per cent.; or, taking the average of three years at three periods, ending 1815, 1824 and 1831, which is perhaps a fairer criterion, the average sums expended annually for the maintenance of the poor, exclusive of county-rates, constables' expenses, &c. at those periods, according to the Parliamentary Returns, will be respectively 1,619*l.*, 2,180*l.* and 2,153*l.*; the increase between the first and third period being nearly 33 per cent., while the increase in the population was nearly 26 per cent. in the same period.

The rental returned to Parliament in 1815 was 9,555*l.*; but the rental, upon two-thirds of which the rates are assessed, and have been levied for many years, I believe for 60, is 12,075*l.* The sum expended upon the maintenance of the poor annually, on an average of the three years ending in 1815, will therefore be about 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound upon the rental, or nearly 9*s.* a head upon the population of 1811; and on an average of the three years ending in 1821, about 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound upon the rental, and 9*s.* 6*d.* upon the population of 1831. The average number of persons relieved in 1815 and 1831 were respectively as follows:

	1815.	1831.
Permanent poor out of the house -	117	120, and 18 illegitimate children.
Occasional poor - - - -	28	118
In workhouse - - - -	22	45, or about 40 in summer, and 50 in winter.

Major *W. Wylde*,
R.A.

Grantham; its situation and circumstances.

Expenditure for the poor.

* Years.	£.
1816 - -	1,581
1817 - -	1,819
1818 - -	2,066
1819 - -	2,294
1820 - -	2,140
1821 - -	2,810
1822 - -	2,400
1823 - -	2,111
1824 - -	2,028
1825 - -	2,089
1826 - -	2,319
1827 - -	2,473
1828 - -	2,184
1829 - -	2,154
1830 - -	2,151
1831 - -	2,154

Proportionate expenditure.

The average cost, therefore, of maintenance per head was nearly 9*l.* 14*s.* per annum in 1815, and only 7*l.* 3*s.* in 1831. It must, however, be remembered, that as far as the poor out of the workhouse are concerned, the above numbers only give the heads of families, not individuals. I have no means of ascertaining the number of wives and children in 1815, but in 1831-32 there were 68 on the permanent list, and 217 on the occasional list, making the total number of persons relieved 586, out of a population of 4,590, or about one-eighth of the whole. The average number of able-bodied paupers in 1831-32 was 18, who were employed on the roads, as well as in cultivating with the spade the land hired by the parish for that purpose. It is not the practice of the parish to give relief to the able-bodied without employment, if it can be avoided; but as the 11 acres is all the parish occupies, it will not afford the means of adhering strictly to this rule. Individuals in the town are permitted to employ some of the paupers at 1*s.* a day, out of which 3*d.* is paid to the man.

In 1831 an alteration in the system of parochial management took place. Four overseers were appointed instead of two, and the permanent overseer was dismissed; the object of the change was to save his salary of 70*l.* a year. The accounts for the year, ending March 1832, were also published, with the names of those receiving relief, and with the number of their children. In these accounts 116*l.* is charged for paupers' rents. The workhouse was at the same time taken into the hands of the parish officers, instead of maintaining the poor therein by contract; the former contractor remaining as governor. There has not yet been time to ascertain whether these changes are beneficial. Under the contract the governor received 3*s.* 6*d.* a head for all the inmates above a year old, together with the earnings of those able to work, after deducting 3*d.* in the shilling as an allowance to the pauper. Since this contract system has been abandoned the average cost of maintenance has been reduced to 2*s.* 5*d.* a head per week, with the same diet of meat and broth three times a week, and meat stew, one day; milk porridge, one; dumplings, one; and suet pudding, one, for dinner; gruel every day for breakfast; bread and cheese for supper, and 2 ½*d.* a week in money allowed every adult for the purchase of beer and tobacco. There is no regular scale as to quantity of food. The overseers supply the clothing necessary, on the requisition of the governor and matron. Their salary is 50 guineas a year.

Change of system.

Appendix (A.)	The parish pays 35 <i>l.</i> a year for rent and taxes for 11 acres of land, which is cultivated by the paupers in and out of the workhouse, under the superintendence of the governor and overseers; two and a half acres are kept in grass for the cows; the rest is cultivated, partly as a garden for the supply of the workhouse with vegetables, and is partly sown with corn. When there are more applicants for relief than this quantity of land will supply with employment they are set to work on the roads, or in collecting manure, and wheeling it in barrows to the farm, or in working for any inhabitant requiring a labourer, who pay the parish 1 <i>s.</i> a day for each pauper so employed. The parish received 17 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> in the first half-year of 1832 for work performed by paupers for different inhabitants. Out-paupers working at the farm are paid at the rate of 1 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> a day; if they are married, and if they have more than one child, 2 <i>d.</i> a day extra is paid for each child.	
Reports.		
Major <i>W. Wylde</i> , R. A.		
Employment.		
Workhouse.	The workhouse is hired by the parish, being part of a property bequeathed to the poor; they pay 40 <i>l.</i> a year for it to the churchwardens for the time being, who are, by the will, to distribute it amongst the poor residing in the town, whether parishioners or not. The total amount distributed in this way by the vicar and churchwardens, under different bequests, amounts to 263 <i>l.</i> a year. The workhouse will contain about 80 persons. The number therein when I visited it was 51; the average being about 40 in summer, and 50 in winter. Of the 51, two men and three women were able-bodied, one being a man with his wife and three children, lately removed from a distant parish in consequence of his being without work. Nine children were inmates of the house; the rest were either infirm or old, or idiots. There was not any woman in the house with an illegitimate child; the parish, in general, preferring to pay the mothers 2 <i>s.</i> a week out of the house. The house is situated in the town; it was clean, but not well ventilated; no land, except a small yard, was attached to it. No attempt is made to classify or separate the sexes during the day; and they are allowed to go out into the town on asking permission from the governor or matron. The children above seven years of age are sent to the national school, there being no school in the house. All able-bodied paupers are obliged to attend church or chapel twice on Sundays. The clergyman of the Established Church and a dissenting minister visit the house occasionally; but there is no religious instruction provided by the parish either for the young or old, nor are prayers ever read by the governor or matron to those not able to attend church.	
Medical attendance.	Sixty guineas a-year is paid for medical attendance and medicines for all the poor of the parish, in and out of the house. The resident poor of other parishes are paid by the case. This is a common way of remunerating medical men in country parishes, by which means they have their own poor attended on more reasonable terms at the expense of the other parishes.	
Law expenses.	The law expenses for disputed settlements, &c. amounted to 9 <i>l.</i> 6 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> for the year 1831-32.	
Bastardy.	The number of bastardy cases had not increased much of late years; the loss to the parish having been about 70 <i>l.</i> a-year for some years, and the average number chargeable about 18 or 20.	
Claypool incorporation.	Continuing the line from Grantham towards the north, along the turnpike road, the parishes situated between Grantham and the boundaries of Nottinghamshire, being a distance of 10 miles from Grantham, are, with few exceptions, incorporated under 22 Geo. 3, c. 83, and contribute to the workhouse at Claypool, which stands about a mile to the east of the great north road, and is separated from Nottinghamshire by the river Welland. This workhouse has been previously noticed in my Report upon Nottinghamshire. However, it seems proper to observe, that 19 parishes are incorporated, of which 14 are in Lincolnshire and five in Nottinghamshire. The public are indebted to the exertions of Sir Robert Heron, Bart. M. P. an acting magistrate for this county, upon whose recommendation this workhouse was established in the year 1817. The weekly rate of maintenance is 1 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> for children under the age of seven years, and 2 <i>s.</i> 7 ½ <i>d.</i> for every other pauper; the clothing is charged separately.	
Claypool farm.	An attempt has been made to find employment by attaching a farm of 60 acres to the workhouse; but this appendage does not appear to have been profitable; and as it is not compatible with my notions of classification and discipline, I cannot cite it as an useful precedent. However, the parishes united with this workhouse are well satisfied with the general results of the incorporation; and certainly the administration of the poor laws, and their influence upon parochial expenditure, may be decidedly demonstrated by comparing the state of the parochial concerns in this district with those of the parishes on the eastern side of this county, to which I have already called the attention of the Commissioners.	
Comparison of expenditure for the poor in eastern and western district.	To exemplify this, if we take the parishes of Koningsby and Tattershall, described in my Report, and situated on the eastern side of the county, and compare them with the parishes of Claypool, Broughton, Caythorpe and Foston, which are the first four parishes standing on the list of the Claypool incorporation, the result will be as follows:	

AGRICULTURAL PARISHES.	Rental in 1815.	Population in 1831.	Expenditure for the Poor in 1831-32.	Expenditure in the Pound on the Rental.	Expenditure per Head on the Population.
			£.	s. d.	£. s. d.
Coningsby and Tattershall	10,163	2,372	2,620	5 -	1 2 -
Claypool, Broughton, Cay- thorpe and Foston - - }	18,925	2,662	1,218	1 3 ½	- - 10 ¾

Having now stated in detail the prominent circumstances in the administration of the poor laws demanding attention in my progress through the county of Lincoln, I have deemed it advisable, for the purposes of perspicuity and compression, to select such places only as presented important illustrations of the subject under investigation, and have contented myself with passing over in silence parishes of minor consideration, which would merely exhibit the same facts upon a reduced scale, and encumber this Report with useless repetitions.

Principle of selection.

In traversing the county of Lincoln, the extremes of good and bad management, with all the intermediate gradations from the anti-pauper system to the pauperizing perversion of the poor laws, are presented to our view. At Lincoln we find 19 parishes incorporated under a special Act of Parliament. In this district, without any apparent advantages beyond the ordinary sources of employment, the directors and guardians of the poor, consisting of the mayor and aldermen, the clergy, and the rated inhabitants, qualified according to the provisions of the Act beforementioned in my remarks upon Lincoln, have steadily resisted the progress of pauperism by a judicious and firm administration of the existing laws. The mayor and aldermen, as magistrates, wisely abstain from officious interference; the directors, constituting the Board, discharge their duties steadily, without partiality; the guardians exercise proper superintendence in their respective parishes. The whole system works well, so that the annual expenditure for the poor does not exceed 6 ½ *d.* per head upon the population, or about 1 *s.* in the pound upon the rental; yet we have here neither Mr. Becher, nor any other individual of superior talents, devoting his time and attention to the superintendence and management of these concerns. The administration is conducted by respectable tradesmen, founding their proceedings upon the regular statements of the overseers of the poor, who, after having minutely examined the representations of each person applying for relief, report their opinions to the court of directors, which decides every case according to its merits. The discipline in the workhouse is enforced as far as its structure will allow; but having been originally built as a manufactory, it does not afford the means of proper separation, classification and seclusion; still it operates powerfully as a preventive check to repress sturdy pauperism, though not conducive to the moral improvement of the inmates. Thus the relief granted to the poor, being restricted by the directors to its legitimate objects, according to the true intent of the statutes, and a workhouse having been established under salutary regulations, the system has been completed by an honest and honourable distribution of the parochial charities, which are very considerable in amount, by applying them benevolently to prevent the provident poor from becoming claimants upon the parish funds, rather than by substituting such benefactions in the place of those payments which ought legally to be made out of the parish rates. To perfect the "anti-pauper system," Lincoln abounds with institutions of almost every description, such as public schools, an hospital for the sick, an asylum for lunatics, a savings and a friendly society, constituted upon Mr. Becher's system and tables, as well as several sick clubs, formed under the usual regulations.

Operation of poor laws.

Management of the poor at Lincoln.

This management of the poor, by constraining the idle and profligate to subsist upon their own exertions, by fostering frugality and forethought with seasonable encouragement, by providing safe and advantageous depositaries for savings of the provident, constitutes the "anti-pauper system," which term I have frequently introduced in my Reports, as conveying my ideas upon the subject more concisely than any other form of expression within my knowledge. This appellation was originated by Mr. Becher, and may be thus defined in his own words:

Practicability of system.

"The anti-pauper system unites, in regular and co-operative dependence, every legal ordinance prescribed for the coercion of sturdy pauperism and the punishment of reckless prodigality, as well as every protective institution organized by religious impulse or moral influence to instruct the ignorant, to relieve the maladies of the mind and of the body, to cherish reviving industry, and to inculcate strenuously upon the working classes the principles of self-respect and self-support.

Origin of the term anti-pauper system, and its definition by the Rev. J. T. Becher.

"This system imposes a rigid observance of the statute passed in the third year of Queen Elizabeth, and founds its practical operations strictly upon the correct interpretation of the laws, and the Parliamentary Reports. At the same time it summons, as auxiliaries, a register, exhibiting the state, earnings, character, and conduct of every poor person. It requires a clear and classified system of keeping parochial accounts; a workhouse for the aged, the infirm and the young poor, and occasionally for the sturdy, constructed and governed upon the principles of classification, seclusion and instruction;

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Major *W. Wylde*,
R. A.

instruction; cottages for the guiltless poor; small gardens for the industrious; a prison for the fraudulent or the refractory; an hospital for the sick; an asylum for the lunatic; a medical dispensary for home patients; a savings-bank; a friendly society; a penny club, for the purchase of food, furniture, apparel, or religious books; a parochial library; and, if the population be superabundant, a fund for colonization, or emigration. Each or all of these provisions should be rendered available, according as circumstances and opportunities may be presented. In a word, the hope of present and prospective rewards must inspire the working classes with industry, forethought, frugality, and moral rectitude; while the dread of privation and punishment must deter them from improvidence, idleness, imposture, prodigality and vice."

It cannot be presumed that these laudable establishments should exist in every place, or even in every district; but in proportion as they prevail in a higher or lower degree, so will the administration of the poor laws, and the management of the poor in such parishes, approximate towards perfection.

If the workhouse at Lincoln were properly constructed, little else would be wanting to render the administration of the poor laws in this city conformable to the above description of the anti-pauper system. The consequences are manifested at Lincoln by the reduction of the rates, and the increased welfare of the poor; and, in the agricultural district, Claypool and its incorporation exhibit the improved parochial management. With such benefits derived from examples within the reach of their observation, it is distressing to record the mal-administration of the poor laws prevailing in the towns of Boston and Grimsby, and in the rural parishes of Cnningsby and Tattershall.

APPENDIX.

EXPENDITURE at *Lincoln* HOUSE OF INDUSTRY for the Year ended on the First Wednesday in June 1832.

RECEIPTS:			PAYMENTS:		
June 1832:			June 1832:		
	£.	s. d.		£.	s. d.
BY Balance of last published accounts - - - -	545	3 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	Provisions for workhouse - - - - -	568	2 4
Received by three rates from 19 parishes - - - -	1,856	4 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Medicine, &c. furnished to the sick poor of the out-parishes - - - - -	135	17 2
By cash for the maintenance of bastard children - - -	25	- -	Garden seeds, land ploughing, &c. - - - - -	9	18 3
Received on sundry accounts -	133	13 - $\frac{1}{2}$	Coals, and chips for kindling fires - - - - -	62	- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
			Furniture, &c. - - - - -	11	1 11
			Mercer's, tailor's, shoemaker's and leather-cutter's bills, and other articles for wearing apparel - - - - -	89	13 3 $\frac{1}{2}$
			Flax-dresser's, weaver's and dyer's bills, and money paid for flax-spinning - - - - -	12	17 11 $\frac{1}{2}$
			Funerals - - - - -	31	2 6
			Repairs and alterations - - - - -	19	17 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
			Taxes, out and reserved rents, and insurance (fire) - - - - -	3	18 4
			Law charges - - - - -	8	9 -
			Salaries - - - - -	155	- -
			Stamps and postages - - - - -	4	18 11
			Stationery and printing - - - - -	12	10 9
			Gratuities to the poor employed in the house - - - - -	8	4 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
			Gratuities to the poor on leaving the house - - - - -	3	15 11
			Removals - - - - -	25	9 4
			Cows, heifers and pigs bought, with expense of feeding them - - - - -	92	14 8
			Out-collection to the poor of 19 parishes - - - - -	1,225	12 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
			To balance - - - - -	78	15 11 $\frac{1}{2}$
£.	2,560	1 - $\frac{3}{4}$	£.	2,560	1 - $\frac{3}{4}$

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AN ACCOUNT of the EXPENDITURE in the Town of *Gainsborough*, for the Year ending at Lady-day 1832.

Dr.			1832:		Cr.
		£. s. d.			£. s. d.
1832:			Provisions for workhouse -	- - -	251 1 -
Balance from last year -	- - -	147 6 10½	Groceries -	- - -	37 6 4
Arrears received upon last year's rates -	-	72 14 2	Furniture -	- - -	13 17 6
Amount of four rates, after deducting arrears	2,235 7 7½		Clothing -	- - -	62 14 10½
Received on sundry accounts -	- - -	117 1 8	Coals and firewood -	- - -	42 3 6
			Repairs -	- - -	34 - -
			Funerals -	- - -	17 14 11
			Printing and stationery -	- - -	13 3 1
			Law, magistrates' clerk -	- - -	23 15 2
			Solicitor's bill -	- - -	21 17 8
			Lunatic -	- - -	20 1 7½
			County-rates -	- - -	250 8 4
			Bastardy -	- - -	68 - 6
			Out-poor -	- - -	1,156 10 4
			Salaries -	- - -	166 11 10
			Constable's bill -	- - -	104 2 2
			Incidental charges -	- - -	94 11 4
			Balance -	- - -	194 10 2
		£. 2,572 10 4			£. 2,572 10 4

AN ACCOUNT of the EXPENDITURE in the Parish of *Grimsby*, for the Year ending at Lady-day 1832.

	Rents.	Workhouse.	Tradesmen's Bills.	General Disbursements.	Resident Paupers.	Bastards.	Non-resident Paupers.	TOTAL.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
First half year, } 25 Sept. 1831 -	54 2 7	46 13 -	49 11 5½	62 - -	260 14 8	36 6 10	46 - -	555 8 6½
Second half year, } 25 March 1832 -	55 14 -	43 11 -	196 5 9½	55 9 2½	229 17 -	38 16 -	42 - -	661 13 -
Amount - - £.	109 16 7	90 4 -	245 17 3	117 9 2½	490 11 8	75 2 10	88 - -	1,217 1 6½

AN ACCOUNT of the EXPENDITURE in the Parish of *Louth*,

	Regular Poor.	Illegitimate Children.	Repayable Poor.	Occasional Relief.	Poor in the House.	Repairs and Insurance.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1830 - -	1,096 16 -	31 7 -	578 2 11	589 18 3	408 8 1	37 19 6½
1831 - -	898 15 6	19 17 -	411 4 -	889 8 4	422 9 8½	12 13 3
1832 - -	962 - 6	19 19 -	413 19 6	836 3 5½	328 7 8½	64 11 3

Apprentices.	Assistant Overseer.	Auditor's Assistant.	Funerals.	Printing and Stationery.	Postage.	St. Mary's Burial Ground.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
19 - -	43 11 2	25 - -	32 5 -½	6 11 9	5 5 7	117 11 4
9 - -	45 - -	- - -	39 8 2	5 19 4	4 8 -	17 1 11
- - -	45 - -	- - -	44 7 9	8 19 -½	5 8 2	- - -

CASH ACCOUNT for the Year ending at Lady-day 1830.

Dr.	£. s. d.	Cr.	£. s. d.
By amount of 1st rate, at 3s. in the pound -	1,823 4 5½	Net total - - - - -	3,270 4 7½
Ditto - 2d - - - ditto -	1,821 9 11½	Balance to late overseer - - -	24 7 4½
Ditto - 3d rate, at 6d. ditto -	303 9 2½	Lost on 1st rate - - - - -	239 14 2½
Cash received of the overseer - - -	8 2 -	Lost on 2d rate - - - - -	302 4 1
Ditto - of Dugdale - - -	6 12 6	Lost on 3d rate - - - - -	49 9 2
Ditto - from Mr. Barn's garden -	4 - -	Balance of coal bill and bad note -	2 9 4
Ditto - for arrears of rates -	40 4 7½	Mr. Goe, as treasurer to commissioners -	24 7 6
		Errors in casting of a bill (burial ground)	90 8 7
		Balance - - - - -	3 17 9½
£. 4,007 2 8½		£. 4,007 2 8½	

CASH ACCOUNT for the Year ending at Lady-day 1831.

Dr.	£. s. d.	Cr.	£. s. d.
1831:		1831:	
Balance from late overseers - - -	17 19 6	Net total - - - - -	3,117 8 4½
Amount of 1st rate, at 2s. 6d. in the pound	1,337 1 -¼	Balance in hand - - - - -	119 11 10
Arrears received on ditto - - -	20 17 10½		
Amount of 2d rate, at 3s. 6d. in the pound	1,859 16 -¼		
Arrears received on ditto - - -	- 14 9¼		
£. 3,236 9 2¼		£. 3,236 9 2¼	

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for the Years ending at Lady-day 1830, 1831, 1832.

Apparel.	Rents and Coal.	Medicine and Midwifery.	County Rate.	Law.	Removals.	Constables' Expenses.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
147 7 1	370 14 5	41 16 9	123 19 7½	45 16 6	31 11 4	20 13 9
67 12 10½	447 3 4	33 13 6	140 9 4½	84 9 2	15 10 -	23 3 6
137 10 11	456 15 8	44 5 6	133 18 4	237 1 9	47 2 10	38 14 5

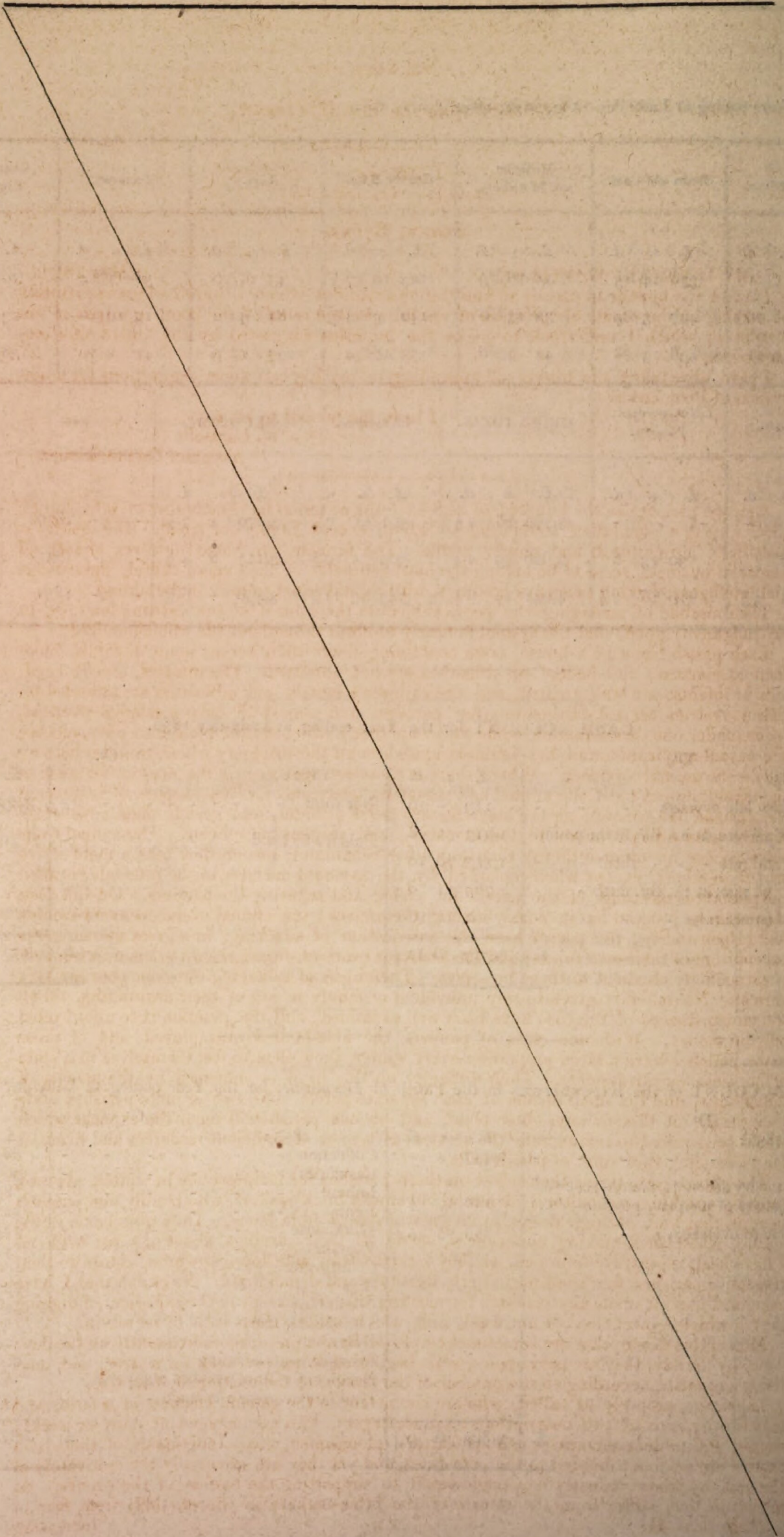
Vagrants.	Non-resident Paupers.	GROSS TOTAL.	Deductions.	NET TOTAL.		
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		
- - -	- - -	3,772 16 2½	502 11 7	3,270 4 7½	- - 1830.	
6 8 7	30 13 8	3,626 9 2½	509 - 10¼	3,117 8 4¼	- - 1831.	
6 11 3½	210 16 7½	4,041 14 6½	543 13 11¾	3,498 - 6¼	- - 1832.	

CASH ACCOUNT for the Year ending at Lady-day 1832.

Dr.		Cr.	
1832:	£. s. d.	1832:	£. s. d.
Balance from late overseer - - -	119 - 10	Net total - - - - -	3,498 - 6¾
Amount of 1st rate, at 2s. 6d. in the pound	1,317 1 8	Balance in hand - - - - -	19 6 4½
Ditto 2d rate - - - ditto - -	1,313 10 10		
Ditto 3d rate, at 1s. 6d. ditto - -	765 11 8½		
Arrears of former rates - - - -	2 1 10¾		
£.	3,517 6 11¼	£.	3,517 6 11¼

AN ACCOUNT of the EXPENDITURE in the Parish of *Horncastle*, for the Year ending at Lady-day 1832.

Dr.		Cr.	
1832:	£. s. d.	1832:	£. s. d.
Rates - - - - -	2,457 4 -	Collection - - - - -	889 7 -
Received sundry accounts, monies received from relatives of paupers, pensions, &c.	120 17 4	Casualties - - - - -	362 10 -
Balance due to overseers - - - -	245 5 5½	Labour - - - - -	85 13 -
		Rents - - - - -	223 - -
		Workhouse - - - - -	224 16 -
		Vagrants - - - - -	43 8 -
		County-rate - - - - -	100 9 -
		Bills - - - - -	333 13 -
		Constables - - - - -	46 11 -
		Lunatic Asylum - - - - -	27 5 -
		Doles - - - - -	10 - -
		Six tenements building - - - - -	206 16 6
		Balance due from parishes and persons - - - - -	61 17 9
		Paid late overseer's balance - - - - -	197 15 10½
£.	2,823 6 9½	£.	2,823 6 9½



No. 26.

Appendix (A.)

REPORT from the Rev. *W. Carmalt*.

Reports.

PART I.

STOKE, BUCKS.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

3 May 1833.

I HAVE the honour to convey to you the observations which I have had an opportunity of making on the practical operation of the laws for the relief of the poor, in a part of the district in which I undertook to make the inquiries suggested by the Board of Commissioners,

Rev. *W. Carmalt*.

I have also taken the liberty of appending to my Reports some suggestions for a new system of Poor Laws.

I have the honour to be, &c.

W. Carmalt,

Assistant Commissioner.

ALL the parishes in the hundred of Stoke, if the criterion be the number of inhabitants, (none having a population amounting to 2,000, except Eton,) are small. The district is essentially agricultural, and chiefly arable. The farmers, on whom devolves almost all parochial business, seem to be among the most estimable of their class, skilful, industrious and intelligent, having extensive holdings, with capital equal to their undertakings.

Their method of managing the poor, subject to the control of the existing laws, is, in my judgment, good, and the system is nearly uniform throughout the whole hundred.

Each parish has a poor-house, none containing fewer than seven, none, I think, more than 20 inmates; able-bodied of either sex are not admitted. The inmates, chiefly aged, silly or infants, are well treated, and the children's morals and education are attended to. Select vestries are established in a few parishes, and almost all have a salaried overseer, (some under one denomination, some under another,) who pays the pensioned poor, relieves the casual applicants, and has imposed upon him all the drudgery which would otherwise fall on the annual overseer. Where there is no select vestry, it is the custom for some of the inhabitants to meet the annual and assistant overseers, for the purpose of inspecting the pension list, examining the discretionary relief account, and giving their advice and directions on difficult points to the managing and responsible officers. The annual overseers assume no more authority than any other inhabitant, nor do they take a more active part than others, except when consulted by the assistant overseer in the intervals between the periodical meetings of the parish for seeing and relieving the paupers. On this plan they seem to proceed harmoniously among themselves; the annual overseers avoid trouble and responsibility; the parish have the satisfaction of checking, in a great measure, the expenditure of their own funds; and the assistant overseer, from a regard to his own interest, is exceedingly obedient to those he serves. Their ideas of managing out-door poor are very correct. No relief is given to any individual or family in aid of their own means, till all the circumstances of the case have been well examined, and the practice is to afford relief only in money. With one class of paupers, the able-bodied unemployed, and of those many parishes have a large proportion every winter, they seem to feel themselves in a state of hopeless embarrassment. Their difficulty on this head is enhanced by the paucity of inhabitants, and the small means of each separate parish. No two or more parishes unite their means on this or any other point, and no one parish will incur the expense which would be required to remunerate the services of a man of sufficient resources and firmness for overcoming this worst of parish evils.

Poor-house in each parish.

Parishes in despair about the increase of able-bodied paupers.

The parties who throw themselves on these parishes for maintenance in winter, are not, properly speaking, agricultural labourers, but chiefly brick-makers, who readily find employment in that line, at high wages, at no great distance from home. They quit home in the spring, when brick-making commences, spend all their earnings, about 35s. per week, as I have been repeatedly informed, as they receive them, and, towards winter, return to their respective parishes, in a condition utterly destitute and demoralized. No parish that I have examined has hit upon any resource for meeting this evil, except in the expedient of digging gravel, which gravel they do not want, and which makes them little or no return.

Men of this description are sometimes employed by the piece; more frequently by the day; when by the day, they are paid upon a scale beginning at 4s. per week for a strong lad, and rising *gradatim*, according to the number of the family, to the maximum, 10s. 6d.

Labourers, properly so called, who are competent to the general business of a farm, and trustworthy, are of two descriptions; viz. cottagers, who are engaged at daily or weekly wages, and in-door servants, such as carters, ploughmen, &c. Individuals of these two classes are seldom a burden to the poor-rates, and yet they are essentially the cultivators of the soil, by whose industry it is made equal to supporting the burden of the drones. So much do they suffer from the return of the brick-makers in winter, that, from fear of

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Rev. W. Carmalt.

increasing the evil, they consent to punish themselves and their in-door servants, for whom, as for their weekly labourers, they seem to entertain a very considerate feeling. In order to avoid increasing the number of settled parishioners, they have recourse to the subterfuge of hiring for a period short of a year, and of necessity, in the interval during which the connexion of master and servant is suspended: the former is often seriously inconvenient, and the latter incurs the risk of suffering both in his purse and in his habits.

The average wages for weekly labourers of competent skill, industry and strength, are 12s., and farmers very considerably reserve their piece-work for the most deserving of their workmen, and particularly for those who have families, and they give employment to their labourers' sons, as soon as ever they can be made useful upon a farm. Such labourers as these never receive parochial relief, never apply for it, and there exists between the master and the man that mutual regard which springs from reciprocal services. The other description of men employed on farms in this district are the yearly servants. They are, however, hired for a period (about a week) short of a year, in order to avoid giving settlements by hiring and service. These men receive from their employers from 2*l.* to 5*l.* yearly wages, and from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* per week board wages, with lodging and fire, and sometimes beer. The lodgings which the master provides for these are out of his own house, and his estimate is, that if he victualled them, they would cost him 8*s.* 6*d.* or 9*s.* per head per week. The farmers represent both these classes of labourers as being able to live well; *i.e.* having food, good in kind and sufficient in quantity, a bit of meat (mostly bacon) being found in each man's wallet at dinner, and as being by no means too numerous for the employment which the district affords.

I did not, when I set out, expect that I should have to describe any thing approaching so near to Arcadianism as this. I have, however, a *per contra* page to write.

The migratory part of the labouring population are a nuisance and a heavy burden to these parishes—I mean the men, chiefly young and unmarried, who quit the neighbourhood in spring, and return at the approach of winter.

In one parish, Iver, whose population in 1831 was 1,870, the sum of 365*l.* was paid in one year ending March 1831, to paupers working for “the parish,” and the return was only 25*l.*; and in the year ending March 1832, the sum of 441*l.* was expended in the same way, and the return was less than 30*l.*

To place this evil, which so grievously afflicts this district, which in all other respects is in so satisfactory a condition as to its labouring population, in a stronger, but only a truer light, I may mention that these men, during their absence from their parishes, spend their earnings, which are very great, at a distance from the place to which they return for maintenance in winter. In point of fact, the parishes to which by law they belong, and to which in winter they resort, have no employment for more hands at that period than those who are constantly resident among them; and, if they had, these are the last men that a farmer would wish to see upon his grounds, or even looking over his hedge. These men, then, as the law stands, or as it is administered, are a pure, unmitigated evil to this neighbourhood. Do I do wrong in condemning the law, which tolerates, if it does not inflict, such a hardship upon the industry and economy of a country, as to permit gangs of able-bodied, unmarried men to earn, during the six summer months, from 30*s.* to 40*s.* per week, and to throw themselves for maintenance upon others for the remaining part of the year? All here aver that the wages of these men are what I have stated above; but suppose them to be only 24*s.* per week for six months, that is 12*s.* per week for twelve months, and on such an income a labouring man can maintain himself and a family the year round.

The return for gravel digging, as stated above, is most mortifying, and the ingenuity of the neighbourhood has not been able to devise a better expedient for meeting the difficulty.

Lamentations I have heard in abundance over the evil, but no suggestions for curing it. I, however, am not one of those who despair of seeing a remedy applied to the mischief.

The scale of rating in these parishes is from four-fifths to three-fourths, and the actual levy on the real value is on the average about 4*s.* in the pound. The universal opinion is, that relief ought only to be given in money. All are favourable to the idea of erecting *hundred-houses*, or one house for the poor of six or seven parishes. In the present parochial poor-houses, each pauper costs about 5*s.* per week. All approve of *benefit societies*. Parishes have derived great advantage from them. These institutions, however, are now said not to be popular. Many have been broken up, and others are on the eve of dissolution. The members allege, as their reason for committing this suicidal act, their apprehension that Government, from their late interference with or inquiries about them, have it in contemplation to lay their hands on their funds. The real reason is probably a wish, on the part of the profligate and unprincipled, to possess themselves at once of their share of the plunder, and they spread this pretence as a means of frightening the timid.

Beer-houses are universally condemned, and strong reasons may be found in this neighbourhood for wishing that they may not be much longer tolerated.

All are of opinion that a more efficient police than the present one is desirable, and no better evidence of the correctness of that opinion need be required than the fact, that the inhabitants support, by subscription, a nightly patrol (horse and foot,) to guard their property against thieves and incendiaries. I may here add my opinion, that a voluntary subscription is the worst mode of supporting a watch: so maintained it is generally inefficient, and the burden is unequal. It is evident, from what I observe and hear in this quarter, that an improved and more efficient police must be simultaneous with, and as
general

general as, any alteration of the Poor Laws, which shall in any way be more coercive on the idle and profligate than the present system.

Bastardy is not much felt as a burden here, except in the parishes near Windsor, and they owe that unenviable distinction to the troops that are always quartered near, more than to any other cause. No means for diminishing the evil of bastardy has been suggested to me here, which it is worth my while to convey to the Board, and I shall not trouble them with my own at present.

The parish accounts in the hundred of Stoke are kept in one uniform plan—that of Shaw, of Fetter-lane, which is convenient and intelligible.

The opinion that the poor ought to have an opportunity of appealing against the decision of the parish authorities is general.

Non-parishioners, *ceteris paribus*, are always found to be among the best workmen. Such a man who gets into good employment seldom loses it by any fault of his own.

Non-parishioners
best workmen.

Magistrates, gentlemen, parish officers, all, all condemn the law of settlement, but I can hear from them no scheme as a substitute worth committing to paper.

This quarter has not been exempt from that awful crime, the burning of ricks and barns, and some of the most extensive and most humane employers of labourers have been the victims. To gratify revenge or to intimidate seems to have been the motives, and some of the sufferers hesitate not to aver that they can point out the perpetrators.

I think I may aver that, with the exception of incendiarism, this, compared with many other rural districts, is in a respectable condition. Those that work receive the full wages of labour directly from their employers' pockets.

No magistrate interferes to settle the amount of daily pay: no parish is called upon to supply the difference between the poor man's earnings and the wages he receives from his master. Those sent into the gravel-pits by the parish (and they come not under the denomination of labourers, nor are they so considered or so called here) are alone subject to an allowance system, prescribed by the magistrates at Aylesbury.

This exemption from the mischiefs which afflict many other parts under the same law, and this tolerably correct mode of managing parochial concerns, is mainly due to the influence of some substantial and respectable farmers scattered here and there in the hundred, who being themselves well informed of the true principles which should actuate the rich and poor in their intercourse with each other, take great pains on every proper occasion to disseminate the knowledge of them among all ranks, and have been very successful in their efforts. These farmers hold land in different parishes, and take an active part in the management of each. To them I was referred on all hands immediately on my arrival in this part of the county, and from them I have received all the information and assistance I could expect.

Not from any thing that I have said in this Report is it to be inferred that I have met with any individual who considers the present Poor Laws a code well adapted for their object. Even those who think their intention good would hail with satisfaction any alteration which may promise a diminution of the expense, or an amelioration of the trouble and vexation which attend the administration of them.

REPORT from the Rev. W. Carmalt.

PART II.

BURNHAM, BUCKS.

SINCE I had the honour of reporting to the Board the observations which I had made on the "practical operation of the Poor Laws" in the hundred of Stoke, I have had an opportunity of making such inquiries on the same subject in the hundred of Burnham as will, I think, justify me in addressing them on the general system, and on some of the peculiar modes which I have found to prevail in this district.

On quitting the hundred of Stoke, I did not immediately find the excellent system there prevailing, as described in my last Report, altered, but as my distance from that Utopia of good management increased, I experienced a gradual increase of those symptoms which indicate an unsatisfactory state of things among all the parties who are brought into contact, I may say conflict, in the administration of this unhappy code, the Poor Laws. I began to find the payers dissatisfied; I found the receivers dissatisfied; but to my great consolation, I still found a very able description of men actively engaged in the management of the parochial poor. The chief payers of rates, that is, the employers of agricultural labourers, give here only 10s. per week (12s. were paid in the hundred of Stoke) wages. Two shillings, that is, one-sixth of the weekly wages of a poor man, is a great reduction; it not only, if he has a family, curtails his command of the actual necessities of life, but makes him surly and vindictive towards his employers, and generates in his mind an unkind and unsocial feeling towards all his fellow-creatures. This is not merely the reflection of a contemplative mind on a given state of things; it is an observation forced on my mind in my intercourse with the various ranks of society in many of the parishes which I have recently visited.

The farmer avers that at the present price of produce he cannot meet all his obligations as formerly, viz. rent, tithes, taxes, rates, labour, &c. and therefore, as the only point on which he can economize at present, he reduces the number of his labourers and the pay of those

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Rev. W. Carmalt.

he still employs. The labourers discharged or reduced come to the parish; hence arises a spirit of dissatisfaction and avowed enmity between parties, who ought and who would, but for this untoward state of things, entertain for each other, I have no doubt, a due and proper regard. I would gladly be persuaded that the farmer has had recourse too hastily, or from motives of policy which have reference indirectly to his landlord, to a very suspicious, nay, ruinous species of economy, the economy of labour; and equally glad should I be if I could believe that the labourer's motive in recurring to the parish was only to show his employer the futility of his parsimony, by making him refund with one hand what he had withheld with the other. I have not found, however, an individual in either of these classes who would admit that the conduct I have described was founded in any sinister policy, but that it is the consequence of a stern necessity. I state this, the result of my inquiries in this quarter, under feelings of extreme mortification, because it is evidence of difficulties which they have to encounter who have undertaken the task of mending the Poor Laws.

All, in the several classes of magistrates, land-owners, land-occupiers, land-surveyors, with whom I have conversed on this subject, argue, that if the farmer could obtain but a moderate advance on the present price of his produce, the present pressure on the poor-rates would be removed, and all parties (including labourers) who depend upon or are connected with agricultural produce would be in easy circumstances, and in a condition of comfort in themselves, and of good feeling towards each other, which they have not now known for years. This opinion I forward to the Board as I have received it, and indeed I may say, it has been pressed upon me. Other means, such as relieving the farmer from some of his outgoings, rather than increasing his income, will be preferred as a mode of meeting the difficulties of the present times.

It is true that many land-owners say that their rents at the present time are well paid up, but from the best information that I can collect, I am to conclude that annual rents have for some time been met in part by the aid of capital, instead of being supplied by annual income. Formerly the farmer counted on having an annual profit, (and why should he not, as well as any other who embarks his capital in trade or manufactures?) and, taking the average of years, he was not disappointed. This gain he used to deposit with some country banker, who allowed him interest, $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 per cent. for it, and I am told that it was no unusual thing for farmers to seek no other means of disposing of their profits during a lease of 21 years, at the termination of which they would have many thousands of pounds so disposed of. No such instances are now to be met with. Happy were they who retired in time with their accumulations. Those who continued in business have of necessity gradually withdrawn their deposits, to aid the inadequacy of the present low prices to meet the fixed obligations of the farmer. The alteration of the currency has indisposed, if it has not incapacitated, the country banker from accommodating the farmers as he was formerly accustomed to do. A man with 1,500 *l.* of well-gathered produce on his farm, insured for 1,000 *l.*, would find it difficult to borrow from a neighbouring banker 300 *l.*, and now, when he wants temporary accommodation for rent, or in any other emergency, he has in some parts hit upon the following expedient: he draws on his miller, whose acceptance (the miller being a substantial man) answers to him for cash; the miller, in becoming his friend, becomes also his master. This description, if the information which I am the medium of conveying to the Board be true, and be, as I am credibly informed it is, applicable to the generality of a class of so much value to the community at large, excites in my mind an ardent desire to see the agriculturists placed in a better condition, both as to their interests and their feelings. I hope that the attention which is now drawn to this interesting subject will end in the suggestion of a scheme either for diminishing their burdens or increasing their incomes. If they can justly refer, as they allege they can, a great part of their grievances to legislative interference (well meant, they admit, but of unfortunate issue to them), may they not hope that from the extensive "inquiry" which is now being prosecuted into one branch of their expenditure, a branch harassing to them both from its weight and its variability, such a representation will be made to that quarter, from which alone they can hope for redress, as to procure them some amelioration of their condition?

Recalling to mind the humble situation I fill under the Board, I feel that I may perhaps be charged with having assumed too much the character of an advocate in the observations I have just made. I will instantly resume my appropriate functions, and become again more a collector and detailer of facts. I have already mentioned that I have often met with men of much intelligence devoting themselves in this district, sometimes gratuitously, sometimes as salaried officers, to the management of the concerns of the poor. In such cases, where the parish has had the good sense not to interfere too much, the result has been beneficial. Of this I have collected abundance of evidence. Before I had the honour of serving under this Board, I had some experience in managing parochial concerns, and I had taken some pains to acquire knowledge from the experience of others in these matters, but I have met with three examples of a system of management in this county which was entirely new to me, and which I shall very briefly detail to you, and contrast the result of this, to me, novel system in each instance, with the result of the ordinary system in a contiguous parish.

The system to which I allude is where one man contracts to support all the paupers in the workhouse, and to relieve all the out-door poor, for a fixed annual sum, to be paid to him by the annual overseers in equal monthly instalments. It will be perceived that very great uncertainty must attach to such a bargain, the contractor being liable to be interfered with and controlled in the assignment of pensions to out-door paupers, both by the annual officers and the magistrates in petty sessions. This resource against the too arbitrary exercise

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exercise of their power on the part of these functionaries in favour of out-door paupers is this: he can offer to take the pauper into the workhouse, or if able-bodied, to find him work out of it. To make such a system act beneficially both for the parish and the speculator, very peculiar qualities are required on the part of the latter: *Ex quovis liquo non fit contractor.*

The only parishes that I have yet met with, that thus contract for the support or relief of their poor, are Langley Marish, Chalfont St. Peter's, and Amersham.

Now for a few results in contrast:—

Langley, contiguous to Iver:

	Year.	Population.	Year.	Expenditure.
Langley - -	1831 - -	1,797	1829 - - -	£. 957 19 -
Iver - - -	1831 - -	1,870	1829 - - -	1,475 18 -

Chalfont St. Peter's; contiguous parish, Chalfont St. Giles's:

	Year.	Population.	Year.	Expenditure.
St. Peter's -	1831 - -	1,416	1829 - - -	£. 700 6 -
St. Giles's -	1831 - -	1,297	1829 - - -	1,231 4 -

Chesham; contiguous parish, Amersham:

	Year.	Population.	Year.	Expenditure.
Chesham - -	1831 - -	5,388	1829 - - -	£. 4,292 19 -
Amersham -	1831 - -	2,816	1829 - - -	1,772 6 -

From Amersham, no complaints have been made by the poor to the magistrates against the contractor for the last two years, and only three during the last seven years, and they were all decided in his favour.

From Chalfont St. Peter's, no complaints are ever made.

The favourable results, as shown above, from this comprehensive mode of contracting, may be referred to the nature of the bargain which secures from the contractor, for the pecuniary benefit of the parish, an attention similar to that which an individual bestows on his own private concerns. No two of these contracts are in all points exactly the same, and it is curious to see in some cases with what nicety these high contracting parties arrange the particulars of a parish bargain.

In Langley, accidents, *e. g.* fractures, fall on the parish, not on the contractor.

In Chalfont St. Peter's, fractures are included in the contract.

In Amersham, the parish meets the expense of compound fractures, the contractor that of simple ones.

The pecuniary advantage of such a contract being so apparent, and being, as it seems, tolerated by the justices, why is the plan not more generally adopted?

It has been tried by more parishes than the three I have enumerated, and has failed on this account: Some farmers, seeing the contractor bound to maintain, or find work for all that might claim it of him, would discharge all their labourers, and then re-engage them from him at a reduced price, he being obliged to pay them the difference out of his fixed allowance from the parish. Others would follow the example, and the contract not being made in contemplation of such a contingency, the arrangement could not last.

A farther analysis of the parish of Chesham will enable me to present to the Board a few more particulars in illustration of some of the observations which are to be found in the early part of this Report.

Parish of Chesham, Hundred of Burnham, Bucks:

Year 1801 - - -	Population - - -	3,969.
1831 - - -	ditto - - -	5,388.

Expended on Poor:

Year 1816 - - -	Expenditure - -	£. 2,849 - -
1818 - - -	ditto - - -	5,528 14 -
1825 - - -	ditto - - -	3,698 18 -
1827 - - -	ditto - - -	4,835 2 -
1829 - - -	ditto - - -	4,292 10 -

The boundary line of the parish is 40 miles in extent; the number of acres near 12,000.

The town of Chesham is large, and the appearance both of the houses and the inhabitants fixes upon a stranger the idea of extreme poverty and wretchedness, which will be confirmed by every observation and inquiry which he can make on the subject. During the late war, the inhabitants were extensively employed in manufacturing articles, particularly shoes for the use of the military. During that time the population of the place was greatly increased, as the necessary consequence of employment and the circulation of money. With the peace came diminished employment and consequent poverty.

They have a select vestry and an assistant overseer; salary 50*l.* per annum.

Have a workhouse with from 50 to 60 inmates; contract at 3*s.* 6*d.* per head per week; governor has the labour of the in-door paupers; the work is straw-plat; no able-bodied of either sex admitted; no complaints of the victuals or the treatment.

Relieve out-door poor in money only.

P. L. (A.)—II.

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Have just carried a vote in vestry for introducing a "labour-rate." There are misgivings as to its answering.

Spend about 1,000*l.* per annum on the able-bodied unemployed, for labour, as it is called; the return for which, estimated in money, is quite trifling.

Benefit societies are being broken up; poverty is alleged as being in a great measure the cause; the principle of them approved.

The roundsmen system was once introduced, but is now discarded.

Never hire short of a year, in order to avoid giving settlements.

Very seldom an appeal to a magistrate on the part of a pauper.

Individuals constantly dissatisfied with the rate at which they are assessed.

All agricultural labourers belonging to the parish could be employed profitably on the land, if the farmer could meet the "*Saturday night*," but his returns are unequal to his outgoings, and his capital has been absorbed in meeting the difference.

There is a great deal of very good arable land in the parish, some of it admirably calculated for the production of wheat, and answering well the reputation of the farmer, where there is no want of either skill or capital. It is no unfrequent occurrence, however, to find land, which used in an ordinary way to produce *five* quarters, now yielding only *three and a half* per acre, from an imperfect style of tillage arising from the poverty of the occupier, a poverty caused solely by a succession of years of unfavourable discrepancy between his receipts and his disbursements.

The farmer's expedient, however, of diminishing the number of his labourers is not quite successful, because when he ceases to employ them, he has, in part, to maintain them as paupers.

I have no further reflections to make on this unhappy state of things; the detail is presented here only in illustration of some of my introductory observations.

I shall next pursue my inquiries in the hundred of Buckingham, where, I am told, every interest connected with the cultivation of land is in so much more distressed a condition than any thing I have yet met with in this county, as to cast every mischief which I have yet thought it my duty to comment upon into the shade.

REPORT from the Rev. W. Carmalt.

PART III.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

AFTER having finished my survey of the hundreds of Stoke and Burnham, I was persuaded, instead of extending my inquiries in Buckinghamshire, to visit a part of Hertfordshire, into which I was informed a system of parochial management, of some originality and of extraordinary vigour and efficiency, had been introduced. I quitted Bucks with the less reluctance, because I knew that those parts of the county which presented the most striking examples of the bad effects of the Poor Laws were at that time being visited by Assistant Commissioners, more competent to the task than myself.

In the different parishes in Herts into which the system to which I have alluded had been introduced, I only found two, Hatfield and Welwyn, in which it might be considered perfected and in full operation, producing the identical results which its authors anticipated, submitted to by the paupers, and acquiesced in by the inhabitants at large. In other places, Hitchin for instance, where the experiment was in its infancy, the parties to whom its management was confided were confident of ultimate success, and of being able to effect great pecuniary and moral benefit through its operation.

Omitting all detail of the idle and profligate habits of the poor, and of their extraordinary ingenuity and perseverance in devising schemes for supporting themselves by the industry of others rather than their own, (and of such details a patient hearer might be furnished with matter for volumes) I will briefly state the outline of this Hertfordshire method of reforming and managing a parish, premising, that I freely accord to it all the merit which has been claimed for it. I may mention, that I refer particularly to the parish of Welwyn, because the system there seemed to me at least as complete as in any other place I visited, and because I was there most courteously received by the parties with whom the improved method originated, and by whom it is still superintended, and who took the trouble to show me its operation and effects.

In *Welwyn*, no permanent pension is allowed.

No relief is given in money, only in provisions or other necessaries, out of the parish stores deposited at the workhouse. The quantity to be given at any one time is fixed by their value in money by the administrators of relief; *e. g.* an order for 5*s.* can be exchanged by the person to whom it is given for its value in any articles of ordinary consumption in a poor family.

Relief on account of a numerous family is confined to the admission of one or more of the children into the workhouse.

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The workhouse has been rebuilt, and is large enough to receive all whom it may be thought proper to admit.

The house is tenanted only by the old, infirm, and by children.

Able-bodied men, who apply for relief on the plea of not being able to find work, (an insuperable difficulty in many places,) are provided for in the following manner:—The permanent overseer, who is master of the workhouse, is also store-warden, and understands well every branch of his business, and he is charged with the duty of providing employment for men of this description. His ingenuity is never more hardly taxed than to set his people to work in preparing materials, in mending (very much in lifting) the roads, and in scouring ditches. As all this kind of work is done by *the great*, and on such terms as to labour and wages as to make it the least desirable of any in the parish, he is very seldom overstocked with applicants.

All supplies of provisions and necessaries, both for the house and for the out-door poor, are provided by tender.

As the amount of relief given at any time to the out-door poor is fixed in the first instance in money, and then exchanged for the assigned value in goods, the poor are presumed to derive an advantage from this arrangement in the price, and the quality and the weight of the articles they select.

The method of keeping the accounts, both for receiving stores into the *depôt* and for issuing them for the use of the house and of occasional applicants, hardly admits of improvement.

The management of the poor of this parish is in the hands of a select body of the inhabitants, in concert with the annually elected officers and the permanent officer above alluded to.

The results of the system, briefly and imperfectly detailed above, as compared with those of the former method of management, strongly recommend it to the consideration of those to whom may be confided the duty of reforming our present Poor Law code.

The annual expenditure on the poor in Welwyn has been reduced half within the last three years, the time the new system has been in operation.

The economy of time is more striking still than that of money. Formerly the parish authorities met every week for the purpose of relieving applicants, and at every meeting about three hours were consumed on that business. Now the parish authorities meet only once a fortnight, and at one of these sittings which I attended in December, when applicants are presumed to be numerous, the whole business, as connected with administering relief to out-door poor, was despatched in a few minutes. Formerly almost all the out-door poor attended, most of them having no other inducement for making the application than a knowledge of their own or their neighbour's success on former occasions. When I was present only two attended; viz. a woman to ask assistance towards defraying the expense of burying a child, and a man who applied for temporary relief, sickness or lameness having thrown a son out of work. The first request was granted; the second was answered by an offer of the house, with all proper attendance of a medical man, nurse, &c. &c.

The Welwyn plan of parish management will have many attractions, even with casual readers, and still more with those who have been baffled by the difficulties of establishing a system of parochial reform, even on a more limited scale. But the truth is, that in the present state of the law many concurring circumstances are required to effect even much less than has been done in Welwyn.

It is indispensable that such a system be introduced, established and protected by parties of such influence and condition in the parish as to be able to maintain it, in defiance of the hostility of the paupers whose habits and wishes it thwarts, and against the disguised or avowed opposition of the tradesmen who, under other circumstances, might expect a great part of the parish disbursements to pass through their hands. It is also required that there should be found competent men willing to devote their time and attention to the details of the plan, and ready to despise the obloquy with which their efforts are sure to be rewarded. When all this has been accomplished, the scheme will be still in danger of failure, except the local magistracy have the good sense to abstain from mischievous interference.

A system like this, which depends for its adoption and efficiency on the accidental residence and the resources of one or more individuals, and on many other circumstances not less subject to chance and caprice, cannot be expected to make its way into many parishes, or perhaps to continue long in any. It may, however, in its results furnish the means of establishing some principles and fortifying some opinions, which may be found among the suggestions which are expected from this inquiry for improving the present law on this subject.

As it has not been my fate, as an Assistant Commissioner, to fall in with any parishes in which I have been able to detect any thing outrageously bad on the part either of magistrates, parish officers or paupers, my Report will necessarily be deficient in interest, and still more, I fear, in utility. I shall, therefore, in conclusion (drawing on some former experience of mine in these matters, where no ingredient to make up a bad case was wanting) take the liberty of submitting to the Board some few suggestions for a general alteration of the law on this important subject.

W. Carmalt.

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SUGGESTIONS

FOR

A NEW SYSTEM OF POOR LAWS.

I TRUST to the liberality of the Board to excuse the freedom with which, in this part of my communication, I shall venture to offer my opinions. Many have been the attempts of late years to lessen the causes of complaint which have so long and so justly prevailed against the Poor Laws, and, on the failure of those attempts, as evidenced by the progressive aggravation of the evil, I may rest my excuse for submitting to the Board the outlines of a scheme which affects to alter essentially both the principle and the administration of the code. The legislative measures which have attempted to mend the present system may, in some instances, have done good, but that good has fallen short of the expectation and wishes of the public. To those who are disposed to set consequences so far at defiance, as to recommend the abolition of the present enactments on the subject without any legislative substitute, it is sufficient to say that the public will never be persuaded to entertain a project so full of cruelty to one part of the community, and of danger to the other.

In the project which I shall now, with great diffidence, lay before the Board, I shall endeavour not to provoke their contempt by inviting their attention to another partial and useless alteration, nor will I shock their humane feelings by recommending that the present mode of relieving the poor should be withdrawn without suggesting another, in my judgment, less pecuniarily and less morally objectionable. I am anxious to state thus early that I am very far from undervaluing the importance of the subject on which I write. I believe it to have no equal in magnitude in the domestic policy of this country. Its pecuniary importance is proved by the amount of expenditure, and its moral importance will be admitted to be as incapable of a just estimate, as it is of exaggeration, by all who have watched the progressive effect of its influence on the minds of the labouring population of this kingdom.

Time and opportunity are circumstances which must materially influence an individual in promulgating a plan for reforming, or materially altering a series of enactments which have had such a palpable influence on the organization of the present frame of society. I therefore take advantage of the general anxiety, at this time so much alive to discover a remedy for some of the evils of pauperism, to lay before the Board the outline of a scheme for that purpose. The plan, indeed, which I wish to introduce to the consideration of the Board for raising a fund for the relief of distress, and for distributing it, is not to me a new one: the principle of it I have long thought the proper one for such an object; but I have never seen till now sufficient encouragement in the general feeling on the question to let any part of it meet the public eye. I am still farther encouraged to court the notice of the Board to my suggestions, by having had my ideas on the subject tested and confirmed by the experience and knowledge I have gained whilst acting as an Assistant Commissioner.

The present Poor Laws may be classed under three heads: those relating to the—

- 1.—ASSESSMENT.
- 2.—SETTLEMENT.
- 3.—MANAGEMENT.

To all or to some parts of each, objections may be raised and maintained.

1. Assessment.

1.—ASSESSMENT.—The Assessment falls directly on real property only, on land and houses. When a compulsory levy was first found necessary for the relief of the poor, commerce and manufactures in England were in their infancy, and real property alone was then tangible, and alone could be made available for that purpose. Since that a property of immense magnitude, to which is attached as much solidity and security as Acts of Parliament and every other description of national pledges can confer on any human possessions, has risen up among us, and the income arising from this property, though as available for all purposes of comfort or splendour as any other, is not touched except indirectly and very remotely by the poor-rate. Had this property been in existence when the assessment was first established, it would not, I think, have been treated with more consideration by the legislators of that day than land and houses. The property to which allusion is here made, is often acquired by means more productive than any other species of employment, of accidents and diseases, which lead to pauperism; and its possessors have the power, by miserly habits or residence abroad, of nearly securing themselves from that small and indirect contribution which, at the utmost, they can be alleged to furnish towards the amount now levied under the Poor Law assessment. I am, however, no advocate for assessing the funds but rather for relieving real property from that infliction; and I allude to the comparative exemption of the one to secure a more favourable consideration for the other. We have instances in abundance in this island of manufactures having been carried on for years most successfully—that is, most profitably to the manufacturers—and suddenly ceasing, in which case the capital which gave employment, and allured to the spot, a population of unnatural extent instantly disappears, and follows the course which the annual profits had already taken. They both seek investment where the poor-rates are least oppressive, or, if possible, entirely unknown. The manufacturer, however, in removing with his capital and his accumulations,

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mulations, leaves behind him the wretched people who had contributed so greatly to his success, some maimed, some diseased, and others worn out, and all demoralized, to be provided for wholly or chiefly by the land. As to the observation so often made, that the amount of the poor-rate is added to the cost of articles by those who produce them, and that thus the great and little annuitants contribute to the poor fund as far as they are consumers, the answer is obvious, viz. that the income arising from land, as far as it is expended in the country, and I think it is so expended to a greater degree than income arising from any other source, contributes to that fund in the same manner, in at least an equal degree, and it also supplies the amount raised under the assessment, from which the funds are exempt. I hazard these observations, to show the injustice of levying so large a sum (seven or eight millions annually) from one species of property for a general purpose, with the hope of securing a more favourable attention to my future suggestions for relieving the land (not burthening the funds) from the impost. I omit to notice all those objections to the assessment which spring from the actual, if not necessary, inequality of the valuation, and the vexatious mode in which the levy is often made. The simple allusion to this class of grievances will procure a host of supporters to any plan which may promise them even partial relief.

In seeking for a substitute for the assessment, I think I partially find it in adverting to the past circumstances and to the future prospects of even the applicants themselves. My experience very early led me to this conclusion: that among all the claimants at a parish table, there would be found very few who had not, at some period of their lives, been in better circumstances; in circumstances, indeed, which would have allowed them to contribute a small weekly sum to a public fund for their own future relief, without feeling the deprivation. It was as evident also, that, with the exception of such as had become paupers through old age or infirmities, very few, though in want at the moment, might not hope, by their own exertions, to become again independent of parochial aid, and in circumstances to repay any temporary advance which might be made them. Many, the whole class of domestic servants for instance, are in the receipt, for a series of years, of an income from which a small sum might be drawn quarterly or annually, without their feeling the loss in any sensible degree. From this class, after marriage, comes a very large proportion of paupers. At present when in service, and in the receipt of wages, more than sufficient for all their legitimate wants and equal to the gratification of their vanity, they seldom imagine it to be a part of their duty to make any provision for the possibility of future wants which may arise from casualties, sickness, or children after marriage. That part of their income which, measured by their necessities, might be shown to be superfluous, they spend without compunction; and when the day of necessity arrives they throw themselves, without any self-condemnation, for support on the industry of others, some of whom perhaps never had the command of a penny to gratify a wish for a superfluity, and hardly ever enough to answer their necessities. These observations apply with equal force to journeymen carpenters, bricklayers, jobbing gardeners, &c. &c. Another class, who, on the average of years, are in the receipt of large incomes, and who make little or no provision for the possible accidents of futurity, and yet are often burthensome to the poor-rate, are manufacturers' journeymen, and every description of artisans and mechanics. Many of these earn, or have the opportunity of earning, two or three pounds per week for months in succession, but few or none make any provision for temporary want of employment or accidental illness, but in any emergency come, without shame or consciousness of impropriety, for support from a fund which is raised from that industry and that economy which others are obliged to practise, in order to be provided with the means of supplying a deficiency created only by extravagance and want of forethought. Every class of our working population will furnish examples of numbers alternating between an abundance which is fatal to their health, habits, and morals, and a condition of utter destitution. We have whole masses of people whose practice it is to work hard, earn much, and spend it all during the summer months, and resort to their parishes as paupers in winter. We have mechanics who earn enough in three days to keep them seven, who devote three days in the week to industry and four to dissipation. Now without entering at all into a consideration of the moral feature, I say that we may find among the classes to which I have referred, and among others whom I have not particularized, pecuniary resources for making some provision for contingent want, and to that extent exonerate or relieve the assessment. Under the assessment individuals of this description contrive to obtain exemption from all contribution to the poor-rate.

As we are satisfied that the classes above alluded to do or may possess an income on an average of years superior to any sober and legitimate demands they can have upon it, and superior to the income of many who are obliged to pay to the rate, I see the strongest reasons for compelling them to contribute to a fund while they are able, which is to be their future resource in want. *

Why

* It is well known that combinations of questionable, if not of absolutely pernicious, policy often exist and are supported by voluntary payments, to an extent far beyond what would be required (if the payment were made universal), to exonerate the kingdom from the assessment, and yet to preserve individuals from want. The journeymen in some branches of trade in and about London, receive as much as 16s. per week, when unemployed, on their refusing compliance with some regulation on the part of their masters as to time or wages, or even on more insignificant points, which the managing committee of the "Society" may not approve of.

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Why should delicacy or fear restrain us from exacting from these people a small part of their superfluous earnings, which left to their own disposal tempt them into vicious and profligate courses, whilst we are inexorable in exacting the amount of the assessment from really estimable characters, who are obliged to have recourse to the most rigid economy, even in food and clothing, to enable them to meet the demand. I do not believe that these characters, alternately spendthrifts and paupers, are conscious of any injustice in wasting their earnings and resorting to the parish when in need. They believe that the law secures to them the absolute enjoyment of all they obtain, and provides a fund, they little know or care how, for their support, when work fails or illness overtakes them. Our first step towards removing the mischief should be to afford to the working classes an opportunity, and to apply to them an inducement, to reserve something out of their incomes as a resource for futurity. It is not imagined that they could ever be reasoned into the practice of this self-denial as a duty; but the same sort of legislative artifice and legislative power, which make the assessment an efficient engine for drawing money from less competent parties, might, if judiciously applied, be made effective in this case.

My suggestion for making all who are able, contribute to the poor fund, but who are now exempt, would be by a personal payment to be levied quarterly on all ranks and all ages.

By obtaining contributions from all whose means permit it, who are now exempt from the assessment, it will be seen, on consideration, that a very numerous body, bachelors, spinsters, lodgers, shopmen, servants, journeymen, labourers, would be made productive to the fund, who are now never called upon for any direct payment. A levy of this nature need not and indeed would not be liable to the odious imputation of a poll-tax, because masters might pay for their servants, manufacturers for their journeymen, landlords or tenants for their labourers, &c., and indeed without some sort of compensating demand, the employers of labour would receive too great a boon in being unconditionally relieved from the expense of the assessment. It will be seen, however, that many who are now independent, or at least in easy circumstances, but holding no property which the assessment can lay hold of, contribute nothing to the fund, would be deprived of this exemption, if the liability to the payment should be made personal, and applicable to every individual. Neither should it be forgotten that the law of the land confers on all the right to relief in circumstances sufficiently necessitous, and that the law of nature exempts none from those accidents of life which confer a qualification for aid from this fund.

For a personal levy of this sort on all ranks, to be levied partly on individuals themselves, and partly on the employers of labour, as might be arranged between the respective parties, suppose we imagine 3*d.* to be the maximum weekly payment, i. e. 3*d.* per week, 3*s.* 3*d.* per quarter, 13*s.* per year. This sum, the maximum, would be quite a trifle to almost all who are now subject to the assessment, and for a majority of those who are now but half considered by the law, having now only the right of claiming assistance from the rate, but whom I propose to invest with the duty of contributing to it. If modified to 2*d.*, the payment would stand thus: 2*d.* per week, 2*s.* 2*d.* per quarter, 8*s.* 8*d.* per year; if modified to 1*d.*, the payment would be: 1*d.* per week, 1*s.* 1*d.* per quarter, 4*s.* 4*d.* per year.

The population of England, Scotland and Wales amounts to about sixteen millions and a half. Now, if all were to pay the maximum, 3*d.* per week, or 13*s.* per year, the sum raised thereby would be about 10,725,000*l.*; if all paid 2*d.* per week, or 8*s.* 8*d.* per year, the amount would be about 7,150,000*l.*; if all were to pay 1*d.* per week, or 4*s.* 4*d.* per year, the sum would be about 3,575,000*l.* I would propose to call in the first instance on all individuals, rich and poor, old and young, or their employers, for a personal contribution at the maximum, 3*d.* per week,* subject to such reductions and exemptions as a board of management might think themselves justified in granting. If the attempt should be made to levy at the highest rate, 3*d.*, I imagine one-fourth could not be realized; one-fourth then being deducted, 8,043,750*l.* would be brought to account.

Eight millions forty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds is about the sum now raised under the Poor Law assessment for England and Wales, exclusive of Scotland, whose population in the above estimate of contributors is taken into the account. This sum, however, might, I think, be made to cover all the necessary outlay upon the poor of all the three divisions of the island. The present expenditure on the poor of England is capable of reduction by a better system of management, which it is destined, I hope, ere long to receive, and by abolishing the law of settlement the expense of litigation and removals would be saved.

There is an item of expense of some magnitude from which I should be glad to see the poor-rate exonerated, and with which it ought never to have been burthened, I mean the county rate. The chief objects for which the sum denominated a county rate, now drawn from the poor-rate, is wanted, are for building and sustaining gaols and bridges, and for law expenses. The expense of gaols and criminal prosecutions might be transferred to the account of the civil expenditure of the Government; and such an arrangement need not, and would not, I imagine, diminish the economy which is desirable on that point. The expense of building and maintaining bridges might and ought, I think, to be paid out of the turnpike tolls. Bridges are a part and a continuation of the roads, and the public, come from what part they may, who use them and benefit by them, ought to pay for them. If these anticipations of mine should be realized; viz. if a better system of management be introduced,

* Three-pence per week is supposed to be the sum contributed by each member of the Trades' Unions to the general fund.

introduced, the law of settlement be abolished, and the poor fund be relieved from all county claims, the sum to be raised for the poor would be trifling compared with the present amount, and certainly, if the fund is to be raised by a personal contribution, it ought to be exempt from all county expense.

The collection of the personal contribution might be managed as follows: a paper (in blank) might be left at every house the first day of each quarter, to be filled up with the name of every one belonging at that time to the household, or willing to pay his contribution there, and to be signed by the owner. The paper should contain a notice that the maximum would in all cases be demanded, except when it was signified that application would be made for reduction, and information of the time and place of appeal should accompany the notice. I could enter much into detail on this part of the plan, but it would only make this communication tedious to the Board, and therefore I shall abstain, being prepared to have it forthcoming if ever it should be wanted for any practical purpose. A very simple arrangement would facilitate the collection from those who depend on others for employment; I mean that no master should hire or employ any one who had not got a receipt for the payment of his contribution last due, without making himself liable for the amount. In those cases where payment would fall on the employer, it should come in the first instance from the party from whom it could be legally demanded. To be obliged to provide for his quarterly payment would have in time the effect of teaching the most thoughtless economical and provident habits, and a receipt for the payment of the last quarterly demand would be looked upon in the light of a character. Many, though in the service or the employment of others, would have no pretence for shifting the payment from their own shoulders to those of their masters. Domestic servants and journeymen in the receipt of high wages would not feel even the maximum a sensible curtailment of their usual indulgencies. Agricultural labourers, whose weekly wages seldom exceed 12 s. should certainly find entire relief from the payment from the owners or the occupiers of the land. A material part of the scheme I am advocating is, that though the collections are to be made locally, that is, parochially, the whole is to be remitted to London, and there to constitute one general national poor fund, whence it would be re-issued as required to the different boards or committees, who would supersede the present parochial officers in the management of the poor. The remittances from the general fund to the different parishes or districts would not be in proportion to the sums received from any one; but enough, be it much or be it little, for the necessities of the place.

2.—SETTLEMENT.—In submitting my ideas of a new scheme to the Board, I have to express as sweeping a condemnation of the Law of Settlement as of any other part of the present Poor Laws. For my purpose I could wish to do away not only with the present modification of that feature of the law, but with the very principle itself. I know no part of the present law of settlement that I wish to retain; I can imagine no substitute that I could be persuaded to accept in lieu of it. The best argument which I can use for the abolition of the law of settlement, will perhaps be found in the advantage I shall obtain in the freedom from all such shackles, when I come to develop my ideas on a new system of management.

2. Settlement.

It will be admitted, that under the present law of settlement great hardship has in many instances been inflicted upon particular parishes by fixing them with the expense, often very heavy, of maintaining numbers who have become paupers from age, sickness or want of employment, but from whose labour, in their most productive condition, they never had more than a partial, often a very insignificant, advantage. Many rural parishes are now suffering severely from paupers whom manufactories, once existing among them, but which have now ceased, have left burthensome to the rates. The law of settlement affects to give a right of relief, and, if necessary, absolute maintenance to parties in those parishes which have profited by their previous labour and industry. It is not, however, the parish in which the manufactory is established and carried on, that derives all (or even any considerable proportion of) the advantages of the concern. The merchants who purchase the raw material, and those who import it, the manufacturer and exporter of that with which it is paid for, and the various other interests whom it would be useless to attempt to trace, derive a profit from the operation, which may be carried on within the precincts of some remote parish with which they have no direct intercourse, and of which they have perhaps no knowledge. The expense of supporting those whom natural decay or want of employment throws on the parish, falls, by means of the assessment and the law of settlement, on the real property of the place, how little soever the owners or occupiers of land and houses in it may have benefited by such a mercantile or manufacturing establishment. A personal contribution, however, would commence with the commencement of the speculation, and it would not fail to find all those and their households who were profiting by the operation. By the present mode of raising the poor's fund (land assessment), manufacturing parishes will often pay 12 s. or 15 s. in the pound to the rate, whilst the merchant, who has grown rich by the employment of its inhabitants, pays often not more than a fourth of that sum in that in which he has fixed his abode and spends his income. I cannot think that a method of assisting the poor, which is consistent neither with present means nor past advantages, can find in any quarter an advocate, and therefore I shall take no farther pains to show its unfairness. The poor are the poor of the nation, not of particular districts, and if I have succeeded in sufficiently enforcing this idea, I may omit in this place all detail of the arguments usually resorted to against the law of settlement, such as the cruelty of separating one member of a family from the rest, preventing the poor man from resorting to the best market for his labour, and many others of perhaps equal cogency.

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3. Parochial Management.

3.—PAROCHIAL MANAGEMENT.—No alterations or improvements (however extensive and perfect) that may be made in all the other branches of the Poor Laws, would, I believe, do much good, if the present method of administering these laws remain untouched, or indeed if it be not entirely remodelled. Limiting the choice of men for managing all the various and difficult concerns of the poor to small parochial districts, and that by annual election, risks, if it does not ensure, the appointment of incompetent and inefficient agents. So much depends on the officers, that their fitness or unfitness for the performance of their duties will cause a very considerable increase or diminution of the expense, and influence most sensibly the industry, contentedness and morals of the poor, and yet very often in their appointment no discretion is used; nay, chance or party feeling, as often as any thing else, decides the choice. As the Board must know much better than I do, from the evidence that is before them, how much the unavoidable evils of the present system have been aggravated by the unfitness arising from a variety of disqualifying circumstances of overseers appointed at the caprice of a parish vestry, I shall calculate on the hints I submit for a revision—and an entire alteration of that part of the law being favourably received.

The system of management which I should like to see established in lieu of that of parochial officers, would consist of a supreme board sitting in London, with subordinate managers of different ranks, for the business of the poor all over the island.

The supreme board would receive all the contributions, and direct the issues to every parish or district; they would appoint all the subordinate officers and prescribe their duties, and have an official correspondence with each district. The present boundaries of each parish might remain, but four or five parishes might be formed into one district, in which there need not be more than one poor-house, and all the houses should be under one uniform system of management. By reducing the number of poor-houses, a better description of people might be attracted to the management of them, as higher salaries might be given without increasing the aggregate expense; a more economical mode of victualling them, and a more productive system of employment might be introduced. A manager would be appointed to one or more parishes, according to their size, by the supreme board, with a salary proportioned to his duties arising out of the number and the nature of the population.

The manager would attend to the poor of his own division, and give temporary relief during the week; but once a week all the managers of a district would meet at the poor-house, and there form a district board under the presidency of the senior manager present, or of some other officer, and with the master of the house for their secretary. Each would bring a detailed account of his transactions with the poor of his parish during the preceding week, and particularly of his expenditure upon them. The board, if necessary, would give an opinion as to the judgment he had shown in the transactions of the past week, and perhaps advice for his future conduct. A pauper dissatisfied with the conduct of the manager of his parish would make his appeal to this board, and in that case the manager of that pauper's parish would then cease to sit as a member of the board, as he, being a party to the subject of inquiry, ought not to sit as a judge upon it.

I feel no inclination, nor is there any necessity for my going much into detail on this point. I may, however, facilitate the adoption of such a method of management as this, by laying before the Board some of the advantages which might be drawn from it.

The supreme board would be in constant communication with each district board, and, by comparing the management, particularly the expenditure of one with another, under nearly similar circumstances, might be of essential service to all, by furnishing hints derived from one to another. The supreme and every subordinate board might receive an account, weekly or monthly, of the supply and the price of labour in each district in the kingdom, and by that means an opportunity might be obtained, the law of settlement being abolished, of equalizing employment all over the country. If a colony of weavers should, by the death or failure of their employer, or by any other accident, be thrown out of work, instead of falling on the parish and languishing for months, as is often now the case on the poor-rate allowance, they would be made acquainted by the manager with the rate of wages then given in every weaving district in the island. The abolition of the law of settlement being granted, and the practice of affording assistance in any part of the kingdom where the need should overtake them being established, they would be expected to repair wherever the returns indicated that employment was to be had. If they had not the means of transporting themselves, they might be furnished with them out of the fund intrusted to the district, either as absolute relief or as a loan to be repaid hereafter. On their arrival they need suffer no want and meet with little inconvenience, as the manager of the district to which they had repaired would forward their wishes by all the means in his power. Masters also who might want men, might, by applying to the district board, know where a supply was to be had.

Agricultural and other districts, where labourers have had recourse to felonious means to extort higher wages than their employers could afford to give or even they want, might, the law of settlement being abolished and a better police established, be relieved of some of their troublesome population. If through the district board employment could be found for able-bodied applicants for relief in any other quarter, assistance would of course be limited to that information and the means of removing themselves. The establishment of managers and district boards, with duties and powers such as I have described, might be expected to operate a gradual reversal of the habits and motives of action among the labouring poor. At present they are far too indifferent to the feeling which they may excite in their employers' minds by the manner in which they serve them. In general it is but one step from a discharge to an application to an overseer for work or money; and as matters stand now, it is

easier

easier to find the latter than the former, which is just the consummation the applicant wishes for. If an application for relief were expected to be met only by information where work and a fair rate of wages were to be found, it is not to be doubted but that our working population would endeavour to secure, as far as habits of civility, sobriety, industry and economy could effect the object, constant employment in places where they had become domiciled.

All our labourers would feel as those who have no legal settlement in the parish in which they have found employment now feel; viz. that an application for relief, which would subject them to a removal, would be their last resource. As an almost inexhaustible source of employment, I should suggest that the parish roads should all be under the direction of the district board. It might be made an indispensable part of a manager's qualification for office, that he should understand the method of making roads.

It would not be too much to ask that, when labourers should be wanted by the surveyors of the turnpike roads, the application should be made for hands, in the first instance, to a district board. All work of this sort should be performed by the *great*, and at wages about a sixth less than would be paid to independent workmen.

By investing a board, free from local influence and prejudice, with the power of appointing all the subordinate officers in the same way as excisemen and other functionaries in that department are appointed, that is upon recommendation, and after examination another advantage would be obtained, viz. the power of removing an officer, whose misconduct might render his longer continuance in the service improper. It is true, that under the present parochial system, evidence of malversation in office ought to be listened to, and if the charge be substantiated, the offending party should be removed, but in many parishes party feeling will triumph over all notions of justice and equity.*

Many other very desirable regulations, unattainable under parochial management, might be secured, if the concerns of the poor were placed under a supreme board, such as uniformity in the internal economy of workhouses, in the administration of relief, in providing work for the unemployed, in keeping and in examining and auditing accounts.† An officer serving under a board would also appear among paupers in a more imposing character than one appointed by a parish, and would on that account, I think, be more likely to be respected by them. The board becoming acquainted with the talents and activity of all their subordinate officers, would have an opportunity of selecting the most efficient for the most arduous duties, and in very populous districts they might have assistants acting under the principal local managers, by which means they would always have well-trained men to fill vacant situations.

I will not trespass farther on the patience of the Board, but, wishing that the result of its labours may be the accomplishment of the great objects for which it was appointed, I shall subscribe myself, with great respect, their

Most obedient humble servant,

W. Carmalt,

Assistant Commissioner.

* In the parish in which I am now writing, information was given to the select vestry that the parish had paid for supporting in the workhouse a youth who in fact had not, during that time, been supported in the workhouse, but had been in the employment of a tradesman in the town who had fed and lodged him. The assistant overseer, whose business it was to see that justice was done to the parish in that department, was a party to the arrangement which took the lad out of the workhouse, and he passed and paid, as correct, the workhouse keeper's charge, in his monthly accounts, for his keep. No vote could be carried in the select vestry condemnatory of the assistant overseer's conduct, or for claiming the money thus wrongfully paid, and to this day retained. More than this, so powerfully was the officer protected, that on the circumstances being laid before a general vestry, that vestry, without venturing on a denial, or attempting a refutation of the charge, put the matter to rest by passing a vote that the "vestry be adjourned *sine die*."

† See Account of Receipts and Expenditure in the following pages.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Rev. W. Carmalt.

GENERAL REPORT, by the Select Vestry, of the Overseer's RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE for the Year ending the 31st day of March 1833: *William Webb Chapman* and *Matthew Dallet*, Overseers of the Poor; *James William Carpenter*, Assistant Overseer.

RECEIPTS.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Balance in the hands of the overseers of the last year - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	146	10	2½
Arrears of former rates collected - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	7	-
Amount of rate made the 6th day of April 1832, at 1 s. 6 d. in the pound - - - - -	-	-	-	1,537	14	6			
Deduction by empty houses - - - - -	120	-	6						
Excused from poverty - - - - -	10	19	-						
Overcharged in the rate - - - - -	7	4	-						
Lost by insolvency - - - - -	6	10	6						
				144	14	-			
Amount of rate collected - - - - -	-	-	-				1,393	-	6
Amount of rate made the 28th day of August 1832, at 1 s. 6 d. in the pound - - - - -	-	-	-	1,534	1	-			
Deduction by empty houses - - - - -	117	12	6						
Excused from poverty - - - - -	11	15	6						
Overcharged in the rate - - - - -	2	5	-						
Lost by insolvency - - - - -	6	10	6						
Remains to be collected - - - - -	10	11	-						
				148	14	6			
Amount of rate collected - - - - -	-	-	-				1,385	6	6
Amount of rate made the 4th day of January 1833, at 1 s. in the pound - - - - -	-	-	-	1,016	17	-			
Deduction by empty houses - - - - -	67	5	6						
Excused from poverty - - - - -	3	8	-						
Overcharged in the rate - - - - -	1	2	-						
Remains to be collected - - - - -	29	5	-						
				101	-	6			
Amount of rate collected - - - - -	-	-	-				915	16	6
By cash one year's rent, due from the Marquis of Bristol - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Ditto - - - ditto - - - Earl Besborough - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-
Ditto on the suspended order of removal of John Obe and family - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	-
Ditto for the illegitimate child of Eliza Wills - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-
Ditto from James Biggs, towards the maintenance of his wife and family (by Colonel Austin) - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-
Ditto from the parish of Brington, for Sarah Fellows - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Ditto from Messrs. Thompson and Howey, for gravel dug by the paupers - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3
Ditto received from voters under the Reform Act - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-
Ditto received from Mr. Wade for old weights - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
							£.	2,910	14 11½

GENERAL REPORT by the Select Vestry, &c.—continued.

Reports.

Rev. W. Carmalt.

EXPENDITURE.

OUT-DOOR POOR.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Pensions - - - - -	1,015	6	-			
Discretionary and casual relief - - - - -	217	3	6			
				1,232	9	6
MAINTAINING, CLOTHING, &c. OF THE PAUPERS IN THE WORKHOUSE.						
Contract for maintaining the paupers - - - - -	737	13	7½			
Clothing and bedding - - - - -	152	17	10			
Wine and beer for the sick - - - - -	1	15	11			
Carpenter's work - - - - -	13	14	5			
Bricklayer's work - - - - -	3	8	2			
Plumber's, painter's and glazier's work - - - - -	10	3	6			
Smith's work - - - - -	18	16	8½			
Undertaker and burial dues - - - - -	2	8	-			
Insurance of the house - - - - -	10	2	6			
Household appointments - - - - -	11	15	-			
Oilman - - - - -	-	4	-			
Miscellaneous expenses - - - - -	-	9	3			
Dinner on Christmas-day - - - - -	1	18	5½			
				965	7	4½
Surgeon - - - - -	-	-	-	87	3	-
Undertaker - - - - -	-	-	-	34	1	-
Burial Fees - - - - -	-	-	-	9	8	6
County rates - - - - -	-	-	-	367	14	8
Petty Sessions, fees and rent of Petty Sessions rooms - - - - -	-	-	-	31	1	6
Law Expenses - - - - -	-	-	-	87	2	4
Stationery, books, printing and Stamps - - - - -	-	-	-	23	7	4
Police rates - - - - -	-	-	-	466	2	8
Expense of the Board of Health - - - - -	-	-	-	125	-	-
Money paid on suspended orders of removal - - - - -	-	-	-	5	2	-
Postage of letters - - - - -	-	-	-	3	8	-
Constables' and beadles' expenses - - - - -	-	-	-	3	16	-
Expense of Lunatics - - - - -	-	-	-	144	10	8
Expense of removal of paupers and inquiries respecting their settlement - - - - -	-	-	-	54	16	5
Money paid to paupers for labour - - - - -	-	-	-	205	5	10
One year's salary to the assistant overseer - - - - -	-	-	-	60	-	-
Midwife and trusses - - - - -	-	-	-	7	11	6
Meat given to paupers - - - - -	-	-	-	7	9	3½
Bread given to paupers - - - - -	-	-	-	2	9	4½
Fuel, repairs, &c. to select vestry room - - - - -	-	-	-	2	8	11
Wheeler - - - - -	-	-	-	8	-	3
Fitting out boys and girls as apprentices or servants - - - - -	-	-	-	27	17	1
Miscellaneous expenses - - - - -	-	-	-	-	16	4
Lord of the Manor common fine - - - - -	-	-	-	-	9	2
Wine and beer for the sick - - - - -	-	-	-	2	18	3
Expenses incurred in bastardy - - - - -	-	-	-	1	19	9
Smith work to labourers' tools - - - - -	-	-	-	2	9	2
Expenses incurred by accidents - - - - -	-	-	-	2	6	9
				3,972	5	3½
RECEIPTS - - - - -				3,910	14	11½
BALANCE due to the Overseers - - - - -	£.			61	10	4½

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Rev. W. Carmalt.

At a General Vestry, held on Thursday, the 18th day of April 1833:—

We, the undersigned inhabitants, having examined the foregoing account, and found that the statement therein of monies received and paid is correct, and that the balance due to the overseers amounts to the sum of 61 *l.* 10 *s.* 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.*, which sum is ordered to be paid them, and the accounts are approved by us.

Witness our hands the day and year above written.

Charles Shillito, Chairman.
James Miller,
John Waters,

George Smith,
Edward Tugwell,
John Young.

Western Division of the Hundred of Brixton, in the County of Surrey:—

At a Special Sessions, held at the French Horn Inn, at Wandsworth, in and for the said Division, on Saturday the 20th day of April 1833.

The last foregoing account having been perused, examined and approved by us, His Majesty's Justices assigned to keep the peace within the said county, and acting in and for the said division, is hereby allowed, the day and year above written, the said account having been verified upon oath.

Given under our hands,

J. Morris.
J. A. Knipe.

The above is an example of the manner in which accounts are "examined and allowed" in a parish in which every precaution which the law authorizes for securing attention and accuracy on that point is prescribed. In this parish is a select vestry, under the 59 Geo. III. c. 12, a part of whose duty is to examine and audit the parish accounts monthly. The account here exhibited, as "witnessed" by half a dozen inhabitant rate-payers, was "examined" in general vestry, and found "correct" to a "farthing." From the general vestry their accounts were taken to "His Majesty's Justices" sitting in "special sessions" for that purpose, and were by them "(by us) perused, examined, approved and allowed;" and moreover "the said accounts were verified upon oath;" and finally, the press gave publicity among the inhabitants, to the manner in which their money had been expended, and to the precautions which had been taken to guard against error and speculation. About a month after the final formality (though the oath was something more than a formality,) as recorded above, it was discovered, that of the 737 *l.* 13 *s.* 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*, (*vide* item the third of "Expenditure,") asserted to have been paid for "maintaining the paupers," upwards of 300 *l.* had not been paid, as alleged and sworn to, and that the parish, though they had furnished the money to the proper officer, and had attestations and an oath that it had been paid to the contractor, were after all deceived, and were still liable to be called upon again for the amount. The money was finally recovered.

It is worthy of remark, that it was the duty of one and the same officer to collect the money for paying the accounts, to present them when paid and receipted to the select vestry, to submit them at the end of the year for examination by the general vestry, thence to transfer them to the special sessions for perusal, examination and approval by the magistrates, to verify their accuracy upon oath, to have them printed, and, finally, to circulate them through the parish.

I wish not to make any farther use of this exposure than to support, as far as it goes, my position that it is time to take the "examining, approving and allowing parish accounts" out of the hands of select vestries, general vestries, and "His Majesty's Justices of the Peace."

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No. 27.

REPORT of *Stephen Walcott*, Esquire.

NORTH WALES.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

MY LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

IN pursuance to your instructions, I have made inquiries into the administration and practical operation of the Poor Laws, in the counties of Anglesea, Carnarvon, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth, and Montgomery, and beg to submit to your consideration the following Report, the result of those inquiries. As there is but little difference in the administration and operation of these laws, throughout North Wales, I have not, in preparing my Report, considered any parish or county separately, but arranged the various matter collected, under the heads to which it immediately belongs.

The prevalence of the Welsh language in nearly all parts of the district assigned to me, and the temporary absence, in some of the parishes that I visited, of persons capable of communicating information, were occasionally bars to my inquiries.

WORKHOUSES.

IN North Wales, the applications of the poor for parochial assistance are nearly universally satisfied by means of out-door relief. The true nature and objects of the in-door system of relief, or that administered through the medium of work or poor-houses, is in general either misunderstood, or very imperfectly understood, and the system itself has been but rarely and inefficiently adopted. In the course of my inquiries I met with only three workhouses, one an incorporated establishment, and the other two parochial. Some account of each will be attempted. The first in point of magnitude and extent of influence is the Montgomery and Pool House of Industry, situated in the parish of Forden, in Montgomeryshire. This house, which is capable of accommodating about 700 individuals, was erected under the authority of a local Act (32 Geo. 3, c. 92), which incorporated 18 parishes and townships* into "one entire district, for the better relief and employment of the poor thereof." The establishment commenced its functions in 1795; but the principles on which it was conducted were far from judicious. In the first place, although all matters relating to the relief and management of the poor were centered in a board of directors, to the exclusion of parochial interference, yet overseers were permitted to draw on the common fund, for the maintenance of such paupers as they chose to relieve at their own homes. In the next, the Act definitively fixed the proportions in which the different places were to contribute to the common fund, with reference to their average annual expenditure on the poor for the seven years preceding the passing of the Act, but made no provision for a periodical adjustment of these proportions. In time, therefore, from local changes, and the tendencies of the system itself, many places became more heavily taxed, as compared with others, than, under their relative circumstances, was equitable. And lastly, the amount of each parish's quota, depended, not on the greater or less number of poor relieved in the parish, but on the greater or less number relieved in the district. This tended to discourage good management in each parish, and even to encourage mismanagement, as the consequences of any act were not fully felt in either case by the parish committing it, but shared with the 17 other parishes and townships. The effects of such an arrangement are strikingly exemplified in the parish of Montgomery, which is perhaps one of the best managed in the county. In the five years ending March 1825, the average annual expenditure for the purposes of the poor was 550 *l.*; whilst in the five years ending March 1831, (under a different system presently noticed) it was only 280 *l.*, or nearly one half less. This great saving took place in the face of an increasing population; and there is no way of accounting for the previous large expenditure, except by the operation of the old system, as the present assistant-overseer, who has acted in that capacity for the last 14 years, states, that the internal economy and management of the parish, except where controlled by the workhouse, was the same in both periods. In short, after more than 30 years trial, the old system was found to be so productive of extravagance, jobbing and frauds †, that a radical change was deemed indispensable. Accordingly, the Act now in force was obtained in 1825, which vests in the directors the governance and management of the House of Industry only, and the paupers actually within it, but directs that the several

Incorporated House
in Montgomery-
shire.Decrease of expen-
diture in the parish
of Montgomery.Alteration in
system in 1825.

* Namely, the parishes of Berriew, Church-stoke, Forden, Llandyssil, Llanmerewig, Montgomery, the three divisions of Welsh Pool (which maintaining their poor separately, are counted separately), the townships of Aston, Castlewright, Cletter wood, Hope and Leighton, and the chapelry of Trelystan, in Montgomeryshire; and the parishes of Chirbury and Worthin, and the townships of Brompton and Rhiston (counted as one place) in Salop. These places, according to the information of the clerk of the directors, embrace an area of 60 square miles, and their united population, in 1831, was 16,157.

† As an instance, a case was mentioned by an officer of the establishment, where the overseers of one of the parishes were detected drawing on the common fund for the maintenance of an out-pauper, whose funeral expenses the house had three years previously defrayed.

Appendix (A.)
 Reports.
 Stephen Walcott,
 Esq.
 Regulations.
 Guardians.
 Directors.

several parishes and townships shall at their separate expense maintain and provide for their poor, either in the house, at so much a head per week, or out of it, according to the general law of the land. In either case, each place is bound to furnish a certain annual quota (to be ascertained by a table of proportions given in the Act), for the purpose of keeping up the house and its official establishment, and providing for the interest and liquidation of a debt of 12,385 *l.* incurred in the erection of the buildings. The following are the most important regulations of this workhouse:—All inhabitants of the united district assessed to the poor-rate, and possessing real or personal estate to a given amount, constitute a body corporate, under the title of “Guardians of the Poor,” in whom is vested all property of the institution, and the power of removing directors in case of misconduct, inability or unwillingness to act. They likewise hold quarterly courts, and appoint from their body auditors for examining and passing the accounts. The Board of Directors consists of certain honorary, and 24 elected members; of the latter, eight retire annually, and their places are supplied by the remainder, from yearly lists transmitted by the different vestries. This board is required to meet weekly, or oftener, if specially summoned, and the attendance and acting of the several members, according to a settled rotation, is enforced by a fine, varying from 1 *l.* to 5 *l.* The privilege of framing rules for the governance of the house and its inmates, and of appointing committees for superintending the different branches of the management, belongs to the directors.

The Official Establishment consists of

	£.	s.	d.
A chaplain, at a yearly salary of - - -	30	-	-
A surgeon - - -	25	-	-
A clerk to the guardians - - -	10	10	-
A clerk to the directors - - -	25	-	-
A steward - - -	50	-	-
And a matron - - -	10	-	-
Total Salaries - - -	£. 150	10	-

No pauper is admitted or discharged but by a written order from the parochial authorities. No visiting in, or, out of, the house is permitted without leave; nor are spirituous nor fermented liquors suffered to be introduced. The aged, however, may supply themselves with tobacco and snuff, which they occasionally do out of a small weekly sum given them as a gratuity for good conduct. There are distinct sitting, as well as sleeping apartments for each sex, and for pregnant single women and mothers of illegitimate children; but the separation in the day-time between the latter, and the virtuous females, and between the sexes, is not effectual, and depends chiefly on the inclination of the parties. Regular hours are enjoined, and prayers read twice a day. The chaplain performs Divine service every Sunday in the chapel of the establishment, and attends to the religious education of the children, who are, besides, daily instructed in reading, writing and arithmetic. Each inmate receives three meals a day. The breakfasts and suppers, consist of milk supping or broth, with from three to six ounces of wheaten bread; the dinners, of meat and potatoes, four times a week; of rolls, with milk or beer, twice a week; and of rice pudding or bread and cheese on the remaining day. For the purpose of regulating the allowances, the paupers are distributed into four classes; viz. those under 4, 14 and 60, and those above 60 years of age. The quantity of liquid, bread and potatoes assigned to the third or able-bodied class, is double what the first, and one-third more than the second and fourth classes receive; but according to the printed regulations, the same quantity of meat (five ounces in the raw state) is allotted to every one. The steward, however, in distributing the food when cooked, takes a small portion from the allowance of the first and second classes, and adds it to that of the third and fourth.

Failure of establishment, and causes.
 Want of employment.
 Expensive diet.

Such are the principal regulations, and they are said to be enforced; but, nevertheless, the establishment has failed to answer the purposes for which it was intended; not, as it appears to me, from any vice inherent in the workhouse system generally, but from causes peculiar to the institution in question. These seem principally to be three; firstly, the want of suitable and constant employment. This could easily be remedied, there being 25 acres of land attached to the house; but as nearly the whole is permitted to remain in meadow or pasture, and as there is no machinery in the house, the only work for the inmates is making a little hay, planting and reaping potatoes, and tending a few cows. The receipts arising from the produce of the land, stock and dairy have averaged in each of the last three years, ending March 1832, 105 *l.*, whilst the average annual expenditure for the same period, (deducting receipts), is 1,639 *l.* The class of paupers sent to the house is the reason assigned why the principle of employment is considered of such secondary importance; and it appears, from the statement of the steward, that during the last five years the number of paupers in the house has seldom at any time reached 100; and that nearly the whole of these have been more or less impotent. Secondly, the dietary is upon too liberal a scale, and consequently the charge for maintenance unnecessarily high. It varies with the price of provisions, (nearly every article of which is purchased); but for the year ending March 1832 the average was 2 *s.* 4 *d.* a week for each person above seven years of age, and 1 *s.* 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* for those under seven, which was less than in previous years. It has been stated, that the pauper is allowed meat four times a week, wheaten bread daily, and beer once or twice a week. Now the usual fare of the labouring mass of the population, and,

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Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.Relief out of the
house.

and, indeed, of a large portion of the small farmers of North Wales, is barley or oaten bread, potatoes and milk, with meat rarely more than once a week; so that, in the incorporated district, it often happens that the industrious and provident are forced to contribute what they are ill able to spare, in order to maintain paupers in a manner far better than they have been accustomed to live, and far better than the contributors themselves live. This result was verified by the testimony of many.

The third and principal cause of failure in the establishment in question, which is fostered, if it has not been generated by the second, is the short-sighted policy of parochial authorities in granting assistance in money, as a cheaper mode of relief than using the House of Industry. This error of calculating the expense of a workhouse by comparing the cost of maintaining a pauper within it, with the amount of relief which he will consent to receive at his own home, has taken such deep root in the incorporated district, that in nearly all applications for relief the offer of less than the cost of maintenance in the house, is sure to be made and accepted. Thus it happens, that the paupers relieved through the medium of the establishment form the exception, instead of the rule; some parishes sending none there, and others only a few, chiefly the impotent, requiring attendance as well as lodging and regular relief. As an instance, the three divisions of Welch Pool, whose annual quota, exclusive of maintenance and clothing, is 260 *l.*, had only 10 paupers in the house during the year, ending March 1832, although 10 times that number were on the weekly pay list, besides many others receiving occasional relief. Whilst this practice continues, the workhouse system can scarcely be said to be in operation, for the paupers know that while they confine their demands within the cost of maintenance, there is little risk of being sent to the workhouse, and are therefore no more stimulated to industry, nor deterred from seeking parish aid, than if there was no such institution in the district.

Nothing short of a legislative remedy is likely to reach the evil, for it is difficult to convince the bulk of the rate-payers, that the plan which effects an immediate saving of a few pence weekly on most of the cases, is not only not beneficial, but ultimately produces a greater expenditure. The remedy which appears to me best calculated to cure the defects of the establishment in question, and to give it an efficient action, is an enactment prohibiting any relief out of the workhouse, except in certain well-defined cases. Each parish would then have a stronger interest than at present in seeing that suitable and regular employment was provided for the able paupers, and that the cost of maintenance did not exceed what was necessary to ensure health and strength. Remedy.

Although the establishment has failed in its main objects, yet is it not without some beneficial consequences. It has prevented to a considerable extent that heavy and mischievous expenditure in rents to which neighbouring parishes have subjected themselves; and if it does not thin the number of applicants for parish aid, yet, from the aversion entertained by the poor of North Wales to the restraint of a workhouse, it fixes a maximum to the amount of their individual demands. Its effects in reducing the expenditure on the poor in the Welsh portion of the united district, will be best seen from the following facts:—Dividing the 15 years, ending March 1831, into three periods of five years each, the total expenditure in the first period was 30,594 *l.*; in the second, 22,522 *l.*; and in the third, 20,792 *l.*; showing a saving in favour of the last period over the second of 1,730 *l.*, and over the first, of 9,802 *l.* What advantages have resulted from house. Comparison of expenditure, and rates at different periods.

The test of rates also gives a favourable result. In 1821 they averaged 2*s.* 7*d.* in the pound on the rack-rent, and the annual contribution of each individual, towards the relief of the poor, was, on the average, 10*s.* 8½*d.* In 1831 the rates had fallen to 1*s.* 10¾*d.*, and the annual contribution to 7*s.* 8½*d.* But the extent of saving which this workhouse effects is more accurately measured by comparing the rates of such of the incorporated places as are in Montgomeryshire with the rates of the rest of the county. In 1831 the rates of the former were, on an average, 1*s.* 10¾*d.* in the pound on the rack-rent, whilst for the rest of the county they were 2*s.* 8*d.*, or nearly 30 per cent. higher*.

The following circumstance, related by the clerk of the directors, will exhibit the dislike of paupers to enter the house, their disposition to impose, and the utility of such an establishment as a test to simulated distress. On the change in the system in 1825, it was believed among the lower class that the House of Industry was to be abolished, and that no paupers would in future be sent there. A man with a wife and three children applied for relief about this time to the overseer of one of the incorporated parishes, demanding a cottage rent free, and 7*s.* a week: the demand was too extravagant to be granted, but the applicant insisting that he could not do with less, the overseer, to his evident surprise, proposed to send him with his family to the house. To this the pauper replied that he did not want that, and that rather than be sent to the house he would look out for work. He then changed his tone from a demand, to entreaty, and urging a previous sickness, promised, if 2*l.* were given him, to manage for himself, and never trouble the parish again; this being refused, he continued falling in his terms, and at last was glad to receive 2*s.* 6*d.*; with an intimation that on the next application he would certainly be sent to the house. No second application has ever been made.

* In calculations relating to the county of Montgomery, and parishes within it, where the annual value of the real property forms an element, I have not used the valuation of 1815, given in the Population Returns, but one made in 1826–27, for the purposes of the county rate. According to this, the annual value of the real property of the county is 274,326 *l.*, while that makes it but 207,286 *l.*

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.Harwarden Work-
house.

Regulations.

Harwarden Workhouse.

THE next workhouse, is the parochial one of Harwarden, in Flintshire. The parish consists of 14 townships; but one managing its own poor, the use of the house is confined to the remainder, who rent it, at 50 *l.* a year, with 22 acres of land, at 2 *l.* an acre. The building will accommodate about 90 persons. It was formerly a mansion, and was converted to its present purpose in March 1830. The official establishment consists of a governor and matron, at a yearly salary, for both, of 40 *l.*, and a surgeon, who receives 30 *l.* per annum for attending sick pauper parishioners, whether in or out of the house. In consequence of the contiguity of the church and national school, a separate chaplain and schoolmaster are not thought necessary. The principal regulations to prevent residence in the house being a matter of desire or indifference to the poor are, the prohibition of spirituous liquors, separation of the sexes by night, regularity in hours, and forced employment. The latter, as regards the able-bodied, consists in the cultivation of part of the land by means of spade husbandry; but the work is not by the piece. The governor, however, states that he personally superintends the labourers; and as the number has always been small, probably he can do so with effect. Those who are incapable of laborious employment are set to pick oakum, and spin. The allowance of food is in no case proportioned to the work performed. The breakfasts and suppers consist of milk gruel, with seven ounces of wheaten bread for the men, (half an ounce less for the women,) and the dinners, of meat in some shape five times a week, with half-a-pint of beer to each daily. On Sundays the adults are restricted to six ounces of dressed meat at dinner; but there is no limit in quantity on the other days. A distinction is made in the treatment of the impotent and able-bodied, in favour of the former; those above 50, who have been accustomed to use tobacco or snuff, are each allowed weekly, half an ounce of the one or the other; and if females, a little tea and sugar is added, with a little butter, should their age exceed 70. The sleeping apartments of the sexes are effectually divided; but in the day, although a distinct room is appropriated to each sex, there is no separation beyond what the individuals themselves may chose to maintain, the communication between the sitting-rooms being quite free, and the premises common to all for exercise. Pregnant single women, and mothers of illegitimate children, sleep by themselves, but associate in the day time with the other females, to the manifest injury of the young and virtuous, since, besides the risk of contamination, the circumstance of observing no difference made in the treatment of the profligate and the chaste, must tend to weaken in their minds the distinction between virtue and vice. Every one is required, if capable, to attend Divine service on Sunday; and the children are sent to the national school for about six or seven hours daily.

This establishment performs the functions of a workhouse better than the incorporated house, which I attribute to the greater degree of vigilance exercised over it by the proper parochial authorities, to its being more freely used as the medium of relief, and to its system of forced employment.

The aged and infirm, orphans, deserted children, bastards, pregnant single women, and able-bodied single men, are the classes usually sent to the house; married men and their children but seldom. Widows, with children under two years of age, are allowed about 1 *s.* 6 *d.* a week for each child, but if above that age, only 9 *d.*, or the option of placing them in the house. Able-bodied single men applying to the parish for assistance, are relieved by an order on the governor to find them work and support; but few of these orders, it was stated by the assistant-overseer, are ever presented, a strong proof of the utility of the workhouse. Its capabilities, however, are far from being sufficiently brought out, as will appear from the fact, that the number of paupers relieved at their own homes in the year ending March 1832, was on a weekly average, 136; whilst the weekly average in the house was under 40; and the sum spent on the former, (exclusive of occasional and temporary relief,) was 592 *l.*; and the whole expense of the establishment, including clothing and maintenance, only 562 *l.*

Dietary.

The dietary of this house, it will be observed, is even on a more liberal scale than that of the incorporated establishment; but the cost of maintenance is much lower. In the year ending March 1832, it averaged 1 *s.* 11 *d.* per head per week, or less than 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* for each meal. The situation of the house, in a great measure, contributes to this: it is in the immediate neighbourhood of coal pits, and being nearly on the turnpike road leading from Harwarden to Chester, and distant from each town but three miles, it has the advantage of good markets, and great facilities in procuring necessaries. An account is kept of the number of meals that each person takes; and the length of any one's residence in the house is known by his meals, calculating three for a day, &c. At the end of the year, a list of the paupers who have been relieved, with the number of meals set opposite each name, is made out, by which the exact expense incurred for the maintenance of any individual is easily known. The plan of charging by the meal would probably be productive of benefit in the incorporated house at Forden, instead of charging, as at present, for a week, whether the pauper has been maintained one or seven days; this, of course, prevents parishes from sending casual paupers there for temporary relief.

Receipts from pro-
duce, and expen-
diture of house.

As very few able labourers go into the Harwarden house, (there were only two there when I visited it in October last), the receipts, as might be anticipated, are not great. In the year ending March 1831, the sale of the produce brought 109 *l.*, and last year 71 *l.*; the

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Results of Work-
house.

the whole expenditure, during the former year was 666 *l.*; and in 1832, 633 *l.* On comparing the accounts of the two years immediately previous to the establishment of the workhouse, with those of the two subsequent years, little difference is observable in the number of paupers receiving weekly relief, but a great difference in the amount spent on them, indicating plainly that the system is made to work on this class with a view to reduce the amount of their demands below the cost of maintenance in the house, rather than their numbers. In the year ending March 1829, the number receiving weekly pay was 162; in 1830, 180; in 1831, (the first year of the workhouse) 142; and in 1832, 136.* The amount of weekly pay for each of those years is seen in the table below.

On the whole, although this workhouse has failed to eradicate the allowance system, it has abolished the payment of rents out of rates, diminished the bastardy account, and reduced the general expenditure on the poor. This is shown by the following extracts from the parish accounts for each of the years ending March :

	1829. 10 Months only.	1830.	1831	1832.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
Weekly pay - - - -	800	1,010	752	591
Casual poor - - - -	93	169	46	130
Bastardy† - - - -	143	166	103	100
Clothing - - - -	26	30	20	24
Funerals - - - -	15	18	21	21
Subscription to Chester House of Industry - - - -	53	133	30 (a)	—
Parish workhouse - - - -	- - -	- - -	542	562 (b)

(a) This was a debt of the preceding year.
(b) The rent of the house for 1831 is included in this sum.

The parish of Harwarden is governed by an open vestry ; but it possesses the advantage of an assistant overseer, whose salary is 80 *l.* per annum. Open Vestry.

The population in 1821 (excluding the township of Saltney, which manages its own poor), was 4,903 ; and in 1831, with the like exclusion, 5,242. It contains, including Saltney, about 17,400 statute acres, whose annual value, by the property tax assessment of 1815, was 18,900 *l.*; but by a valuation made six or seven years ago, 31,800 *l.* Since May 1828, the rates have been collected on one-third of the latter value, every tenement being rated. Statistics.

Overton Workhouse.

THE remaining workhouse is that of Overton, in Flintshire, which is a very small and incommodious building, little else than a brick cottage, without, however, a cottage's neatness. The parishes of Bangor and Worthinbury, and the township and chapelry of Halghton and Penly, whose united population is 3,020, are in connexion with this house, and pay a certain annual sum as rent, for the privilege of sending their poor there. Of this privilege little advantage is taken ; and the house is chiefly used by the overseers as an instrument of compelling a good bargain with applicants for relief. The system of this establishment differs from that of the two former, in that each pauper is farmed out at 2 *s.* a week to a contractor, who besides is allowed the house and a few acres of land rent free; he is entitled likewise to all the labour he can extract from the inmates, which is no large quantity, as children and old people form the great majority of the paupers sent to the house. Of 13 that were there about the beginning of September 1832, only one was between the ages of 12 and 60 years. There is no system of employment attached to the establishment, but the present contractor is a brickmaker, and the paupers who are able, assist him in the manufacture. This and the occasional cleaning of the crops on his lands, vindicates, in a measure, the appellation of *workhouse*; in other respects, it is little else than a poor Overton Work-house.
Four other places in connexion.
Inmates farmed out.
No regulations.

* In 1831 and 1832, some of the impotent paupers, who were previously receiving weekly relief at their own homes, were taken into the house, which accounts for the decrease in those years of the weekly list.

† The number of illegitimate children was nearly the same in each year.—In 1829, 41; 1830, 44; 1831, 39; 1832, 41.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.Evidence of
Mr. Price.Compariso of
expenditure, and
rates at different
periods.

Open vestry.

Statistics.

Bangor and
Overton compared.Evidence of Rev.
Mr. Davies and
the overseers.

Open vestry.

Statistics.

a poor-house, for there is no distinction in diet, no separation of sexes further than what takes place in farm houses, and in short, no regulations. Nevertheless, the establishment is considered to have saved money, and prevented imposition in Overton: and judging from the testimony of Mr. Price, the labouring classes certainly appear to rely more on their own exertions, and to be in a more healthy state than usual. This gentleman, in his answers to the circular queries, states, "that there were not more than three men out of employment; that a man with a good character would certainly never be out of work; that not more than four or five able-bodied men received occasional relief during the last year; that no allowance is made from the poor-rates on account of large families; that the system of giving regular relief to able-bodied labourers in the employment of individuals has never found its way into the parish, being considered unlawful and disgraceful; that rents are very rarely paid out of the rates; that the industry of the labourers of the parish is much the same as formerly; that the workmen are generally good, and supposed to be improved; that they generally remain in the same employ, unless the employer has no occasion for them; that there were no instances of persons voluntarily throwing themselves out of work, and then claiming relief on account of temporary want of employment; that there were only 28 poor receiving relief out of the house, and that of those the only males were two idiots, an old farmer, and a carpenter; the remaining 24 being females, generally old widows." These answers were given in the month of July or August 1832, and exhibit a very small amount of pauperism for a population of 1,746, which Overton possesses.

The good management of this parish is likewise evinced by the progressive diminution in the expenditure on the poor during the last 15 years. I have divided this period into three portions, for facility of comparison. In the first, ending March 1821, the total amount expended was 1,981 *l.*; in the second, 1,792 *l.*; and in the last, ending March 1831, 1,587 *l.* In another point of view the result is also favourable. The sums levied in 1831 for the general purposes of the poor-rate, gave a rate of about 1 *s.* 8 *d.* per annum in the pound on the rack-rent; the *actual expenditure* on the poor, (taking the valuation of the parish in 1815 as an element in the calculation), made the rates not more than 1 *s.* 2 *d.*; whereas in 1821, on a similar calculation, the actual expenditure made them 2 *s.* 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; and computing on the population of the two years, the rates in 1821 were 8 *s.* 10 *d.* per annum for each person; and in 1831 (with an increase of only 78 on 1,668, the census of 1821), 3 *s.* 11 *d.*

The vestry in Overton is open, but there is an assistant-overseer.

The number of cultivated acres is 3,923, namely, 2,646 pasture, and 1,277 arable; there are besides about 50 acres of common, and, as it is supposed, about 220 of wood land. According to the property-tax assessment in 1815, the annual value of the real property was 5,800 *l.*

Although the moral condition of the labouring classes of Overton has thus been improving during the last 10 years, yet, using the same tests, the contrary appears to be the case in the adjoining township of Bangor, which also possesses the use of the workhouse. A proof that the workhouse system is good or bad, as the management of those who are entrusted with its application is judicious or otherwise. During the last 15 years, divided into periods as before, the sums spent on the poor in that township have been increasing in almost the same proportion that they decreased in Overton. In the first period, the amount expended was 755 *l.*; in the second, 861 *l.*; and in the third, 1,085 *l.* The gross sums levied in 1831 for the general purposes of the poor-rate, made the rates in the pound on the rack-rent about 1 *s.* 10 *d.* per annum. The *actual expenditure* on the poor (calculating on the valuation of 1815) made them 1 *s.* 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.*, but in 1821 they were only 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*; and if the rates in the two years be compared with reference to the population, the result is also in favour of 1821, when each person paid on an average 5 *s.* 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* per annum, but in 1831 (with an increase in the population from 571 to 648), 7 *s.* 3 *d.*

The testimony collected in this parish, which is divided into five townships, confirms the inferences to be drawn from these calculations. The curate, Mr. Davies, in his replies, which were prepared with the assistance of the 10 overseers and several farmers, states "that the cottages of the labourers are exempted from rates in three of the townships;" and I found that in each of the other two, if the occupier is poor, and belongs to the township, the rate is paid by the township. He further states "that rents are in some cases paid out of the rates; that there are able-bodied labourers, with large families, in the employment of individuals receiving allowance from the parish; that the relief, though not given according to any scale, is generally given under the opinion that the magistrates, if applied to, would order it; that 64 individuals received relief during the week previous to the replies being framed (some time in July or August 1832); and that there is reason to believe that the industry of their labourers is diminishing." This, however, was attributed to high rents.

The parish of Bangor possesses an open vestry; but the township of that name employs an assistant-overseer.

The population of the whole parish was 1,232 in 1821, and 1,389 in 1831; of the township, 571 in the former, and 648 in the latter year. The number of acres is 5,464, of which more than half is pasture. There is no common, and very little wood land. By the assessment of 1815, the annual value of the real property in the whole parish was 13,351 *l.*; in the township, 4,517 *l.*

I heard

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.A few places in
connexion with two
English work-
houses.

I heard of no other workhouses in the district assigned to me; but there are four parishes and three townships in Flintshire, and one parish in Denbighshire, which are in connexion with the city of Chester workhouse, paying it an annual rent, varying from 3*l.* 3*s.* to 25*l.*, and a small sum towards the expenses of the establishment, varying from 6*d.* to 7*l.*, according to the circumstances of the parish or township. If paupers are placed in the house, an additional weekly charge for each is made. In 1832, this was 1*s.* 11*d.* There are also two parishes in Denbighshire, Chirk and Llansillin, which are incorporated with, and wholly under the control of, the workhouses at Oswestry. As the principles and operation of these two establishments will doubtless be furnished by the Assistant Commissioners in whose districts they lie, it will be needless to say more, than that as to the places in connexion with that at Chester, they avail themselves but sparingly of the privilege of sending their poor there, and use the house chiefly as a means of effecting a good bargain with applicants for relief. In 1831-32, some of these places did not send any of their paupers, and Holywell, which pays the highest rent and sends the greatest number, had only 19 in the house out of a list of 259. I believe, therefore, that the Chester house has had very little, if any, effect in repressing pauperism in these places; although probably it may tend to diminish the gross expenditure in relief, as in the case of the incorporated establishment in Montgomeryshire.

Whether workhouses would be desirable in North Wales, is a point on which there was a conflict of opinion. On the whole, the result of my inquiries is, that in towns and populous places their utility is not only admitted, but amongst the intelligent their introduction is strongly desired. The first expense, however, and the usual supineness of individuals to originate what is of general concern, combined with the opposition which it is thought would probably arise in some quarter, have prevented the desire from being carried into execution. The objection of expense might be partly removed by the union of several parishes; but the conditions under which this may be effected, are by no means generally known.

In the mountainous and strictly rural districts, the workhouse system is not considered with any favour, nor am I prepared to say that the absence of these establishments is much felt in such places. The parishes are frequently extensive, so that but few could join in the undertaking, and very poor, which renders the objection of first expense of more weight; and as the current of opinion in these districts sets strongly against the system, and the population is in general industriously inclined, and very thin, probably with some necessary alterations in the poor laws, and the introduction of piece-work, matters would go on very well without resorting to workhouses.

As to the expediency of prohibiting, with certain exceptions, relief to the able-bodied out of the workhouse, in places possessing the use of one, there can be but little doubt, speaking from observation, that as parish authorities are at present constituted, an enactment to that effect is absolutely necessary to give the system anything like a fair trial. It is quite useless to invest overseers with the option of relieving the poor in the house, while such abundant and powerful motives exist for giving relief out of it. At the same time it cannot be denied, that such an enactment would at first be highly unpopular with the great majority of the rate-payers, and the degree of unpopularity would be in proportion to the excess of expense in maintaining a pauper in the house over what he will take at his own home.

As to prohibiting
relief out of work-
houses.

POOR-HOUSES.

THE few poor-houses that I met with, were in some of the towns, as Carnarvon, Bangor, Llangollen, Holyhead, and two or three more, and, from these specimens, it is no matter of regret that they are not more common. They generally consist of several small adjoining tenements, in which the pauper occupies one or two rooms, according to the size of his family. He is subject to no regulations or control whatever, and with the exception of lodging, provides for himself as other paupers do*. In fact, this system is only a contrivance to save the difference between the rents of pauper cottages, and the interest of the sum it takes to build or purchase a poor-house.

Where a number of paupers of all ages, sexes, characters and dispositions, are herded together, and subject to no superintendence, little else is to be expected than a mass of poverty, misery, and vice; such is the case in the poor-houses I examined. To the aged they are places of punishment, from the occurrence at all hours of disturbances and brawls; and to the young, schools of idleness and profligacy, where example quickly corrupts the better inclined to the level of the worst. These establishments may indeed save parishes a few pounds annually in rents, but the sacrifice of morality, and spread of vicious habits which they occasion is incalculable.

RELIEF OUT OF WORKHOUSES.

THE roundsmen, and labour-rate systems are quite unknown in North Wales. On gentleman indeed, Mr. Davies, in his answers to numbers 8 and 11 of the first set of circular queries, has stated that they prevail in the parish of Bangor, in Flintshire; but on a personal

* The poor-house at Wrexham, however, differs from those above alluded to; in that the paupers within it are dieted by contract, at 3*s.* a week for each.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

a personal examination, it turned out that he attached a different meaning to the terms than they usually bear. Mr. Pool, the curate of Llandysillio, in Montgomeryshire, has likewise in his answers to the former query, stated that the labourers are apportioned according to the number of horses employed; but I examined on that point a very intelligent farmer of the parish, and the assistant-overseer, neither of whom had heard of the practice.

The nearest approach to the labour-rate system that I met with, was in the parish of Bodedern, in Anglesea. There the vestry, chiefly farmers, agreed that pecuniary relief should be refused to able-bodied single men seeking it as being out of work; and that the applicant should be sent to the farmers in rotation, to be employed by each as many days as he paid shillings to the poor-rate.

In these cases the parish finds the man in clothes, if necessary, but pays nothing to the farmer, who on the other hand gives the labourer nothing but his board and lodging. The plan does not appear to be compulsory, as a gentleman, a landowner in the parish, refused to take a man sent to him in this manner, and the point was not insisted on; nor has a similar attempt been since made on him or the other resident gentry. The farmers, however, still adhere to it as amongst themselves.

Principal modes of relief.

Payment of rents out of rates.

The principal modes of relieving the poor in North Wales, are, by payment of rents out of the rates; by exempting cottages from assessments, or, if assessed, remitting the rate; by regular weekly relief or allowance; and by casual or occasional assistance in money or in kind. The payment of rent out of the rates is nearly universal. Harwarden, possessing a workhouse, is however an exception, and it is not carried to the same extent in the incorporated district, or in Overton, as elsewhere.

This mode of relief is confined to the aged, the married, and widows with children; but in many parishes it is extended to nearly all the married labourers. In Llanidloes out of 2,000 *l.* spent on the poor, nearly 800 *l.*, and in Bodedern out of 360 *l.*, 113 *l.* are thus exhausted. In Anglesea, and part of Carnarvonshire, overseers frequently give written guarantees, making the parish responsible for the rent of cottages let to the poor. I annex a copy of one from a parish officer, to himself as landlord:

"WE, the Overseers of the Poor of the parish of Llanfachraeth, will pay the rent of A. Jones, pauper of our parish, to W. Hughes, of Bodedern, the sum of one pound five shillings yearly, commencing to-morrow the 13th November 1827, for an apartment of a house in Bodedern.

(signed) "William Hughes."

William Hughes, whom I examined, stated that he signed the above on behalf of the parish, and was the person mentioned in the body of it.

Pauper tenants preferred.

Paupers have thus become a very desirable class of tenants, much preferable, as was admitted by several cottage proprietors, to the independent labourers, whose rent at the same time this mode of relief enhances. Of this I received much testimony; amongst others an overseer of Dolgelly stated that there were many apartments and small houses in the town not worth, to let, 1 *l.* a year, for which, in consequence of parochial interference with rents, from 1 *l.* 14 *s.* to 2 *l.* was paid; and the clerk to the directors of the Montgomery House of Industry mentioned an instance of a person in his neighbourhood who obtained 10 cottages from the landowner at a yearly rent of 18 *l.*, and re-let them separately for 50 *l.* Eight of his tenants were parish paupers.

Exempting pauper cottages from rates.

This species of property being thus a source of profitable investment, speculation to a considerable extent has taken that direction; and it is further encouraged by exempting pauper cottages from rates, or paying them out of the parochial funds, a mode of relief as universal as the last.

In general all the tenements in a parish are rated, but the rates are very rarely collected from the smaller class, except in the case of non-parishioners. One or two instances will suffice to show the extent to which the exemption is carried.

Instances of Welsh Pool and Carnarvon.

Rent of pauper cottages augmented by remission of rates.

The middle division of Welsh Pool contains 535 tenements, which are all rated, but of this number 207 are at a rent not exceeding 6 *l.* a year, from which no rate is obtained; and the Rev. Mr. Trevor states, as to the town of Carnarvon, that whole streets have been built on speculation by three or four persons, the houses in which are let under 4 *l.* a year, and pay no rates. Except the landlords, few doubted but that the rent, in these cases is augmented by the amount of rate remitted; and there was much complaint that this class of proprietors not only escaped contributing to the burthens of a parish, but actually increased them, by creating a cottier pauper population. In the rural districts the cottages generally belong to the landowner; but the farmers, to whose holdings they are usually attached, are in most instances the immediate landlords of the poor. In and near towns the proprietors are of all classes, chiefly however builders and tradesmen. The following is the evidence on these points of the vicar of Bangor in Carnarvonshire; he states, "that there are not many labourers owning their own cottages; that the proprietors of cottages are persons who, having saved small sums, build cottages as a means of procuring the highest interest for their money; that at least the half of the town of Bangor consists of cottages, many of which are exempted from rates on account of the poverty of the occupier, there being no law to compel the owner to pay the rates; that a law to that effect seems very much wanted; that the occupiers generally belong to other parishes, and by this defect in the law become virtually burthensome to the parish in which they dwell; and

Evidence of the vicar of Bangor.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.Rating proprietor,
instead of occupier,
of small tenements.

and that the poor tenant is given to understand by his landlord that his cottage will be free from rates, and thus is induced to give a higher rent for it." The usual rent of a cottage varies from 1 *l.* 10 *s.* to 3 *l.* a year, but in or near towns, or where a little land is attached in addition to the strip of garden, it is higher, seldom however exceeding 6 *l.*

The proposition of rating the owner of small tenements is one of great popularity, and was received with delight by parish officers. I met with only one dissentient, an assistant-overseer, who on further examination proved to be a proprietor of several exempted cottages. On the other hand, the assistant-overseer of the township of Bangor, in Flintshire, also a proprietor, said that he was so convinced of the expediency and advantage of rating the landlord, that he would cheerfully assent to an enactment for the purpose, although it would lessen the value of his property.

The 19th section of Mr. Sturges Bourne's Act, which gives authority to rate the proprietors of tenements whose annual value is over 6 *l.* and under 20 *l.*, has, in no instance that I could learn, been acted on; indeed, as respects North Wales, it is of no use, since it stops just where the evil commences; comparatively little difficulty being felt in collecting the rates from tenements above the annual value of 6 *l.*, but quite the reverse with those under that value. The general opinion indeed is, that proprietors of tenements not exceeding the annual value of 6 *l.* should be rated, instead of the occupiers, and that they should be charged at once, rather than in default of payment by the tenant.

19 sec. of 59 G. 3,
c. 12.

Although this plan sacrifices the advantage of causing the poor to act as checks on each other in preventing improper applications for parish aid, yet probably it would answer better in Wales than leaving the occupier liable in the first instance. The degree of irritation produced by enforcing the rate on the little occupier, is far greater than the smallness of the sum would seem likely to occasion; and, in fact, I believe it is not caused so much by the amount, as by the very prevalent idea, that it is unjust and unnatural to make the poor contribute to the support of the pauper. This irritation is increased, and perpetually recurring, by the uncertainty of the demand, and the frequency of the collector's visits, six or seven rates being usually made in the year, and in some places 10 or 12. In fine, from conversations with some of this class of cottagers, and with small farmers well acquainted with, and concurring in their opinions, I gathered, that exacting the rate directly from the poor, tends to place their feelings in hostility to the parish authorities, and to alienate them from the wealthier orders, whom I have more than once heard accused of contriving the tax to ease themselves at the expense of the industrious poor.

All the examiners thought that the rate would be much more cheerfully paid in the shape of rent, as it would then be a matter of contract, to which the tenant being a party, he would lose the idea of involuntary taxation, and with it his present feelings of dissatisfaction.

Another disadvantage of enforcing rates from those just above the line of pauperism I found to be, that it weakens their reluctance, or rather strengthens their disposition, to throw themselves on the parish. They generally consider their payments for rates in the light of subscriptions to a benefit society, and think that they thereby acquire an additional moral, if not legal, right to parochial assistance. I have occasionally heard an old pauper complain, "I paid poor-rate for so many years (mentioning the number), when I was young and earning money, and it is a shame that the parish allows me now only 2 *s.* or 3 *s.* a week."

A third mode of affording relief is by fixed weekly payments; and although this is also confined to the aged, the married and widows with families, yet it absorbs the largest portion of the sums spent on the poor. A list of paupers to be thus relieved, with the amount for each, is generally made out by the vestries at the beginning of the parochial year; and should it subsequently be necessary to place any one on the list, the overseers either call a vestry for the purpose, or more usually afford temporary assistance till the next meeting.

Weekly allowance.

It is a lamentable fact, that when a pauper once gets on this list, he considers it a provision for life; and seldom anything but death relieves the parish of the burthen. Much reluctance, therefore, usually exists to place any one on the list besides the impotent and widows with families; and these in general constitute the great majority. The weekly allowance to the aged varies from 1 *s.* to 3 *s.*; that of the married, and widows with children, is according to the number of the family, but very rarely does it exceed or even reach 6 *s.* In the city and parish of St. Asaph, out of a list of 228 paupers in 1831-32, only one received 6 *s.* and six 5 *s.* a week; in the manufacturing town of Holywell, out of 259, one received 6 *s.*, and two 5 *s.*; in the rural parish of Llangerniew, in Denbighshire, out of 81, two received 4 *s.*, and one 5 *s.* 6 *d.*; and in Llandderfel, out of 90, not one received as much as 5 *s.* a week.

Amount usually
given.

Examples.

OCCASIONAL OR CASUAL RELIEF.

By far the greatest part of the occasional or casual relief afforded, is given in money; but fuel, articles of clothing, medicines and medical attendance, and in some parishes potatoes for planting, are also supplied.

The parishes, that partly relieve with seed potatoes, speak highly of the practice as beneficial to both parties. The parish gains by the excess of the value of the crop over the seed furnished, and the aid thus given has a less tendency to degrade the poor man in his

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Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Relief by way of
medical assistance.

Mr. Lutener's
evidence.

own estimation, than pecuniary relief; at the same time that it encourages his industrious habits, and is not so liable to misapplication as money.

In rural districts, if relief be given in the shape of medical aid, the practitioner is generally paid by the case; but in towns and their neighbourhood, he more usually receives an annual salary, under a contract, which I never found to include non-parishioners.

The medical man is always greatly under paid, and to remunerate himself for his time and medicines, expects to have the treatment of the casual and resident non-settled paupers.

The following evidence of Mr. Lutener, on this subject, is valuable, as he is the principal surgeon in Newtown, and formerly had the contract for the sick poor of that parish:

"In the parish of Newtown, containing a population of upwards of 5,000, (a very large portion of which are employed in the various branches of the flannel manufactory, consequently a great number of poor for medical and surgical attendance, medicines, &c.) the parish contract, for 20*l.* per annum, a sum totally inadequate to the labour, and for which it is impossible the poor can receive the attention and medicines necessary. This custom unfortunately prevails much too generally throughout the kingdom, and opens a door to great fraud on neighbouring parishes, as medical men take the farming of the poor at a low rate, with an agreement that the orders of suspension made on other parishes shall be sent to them; and thus by making high charges they make out the deficiency of stipend at the cost of another parish."

My inquiries elsewhere on the matter confirmed this testimony, except that I never could get at an actual agreement that the surgeon should have the sick poor under suspended orders; but it was constantly admitted that it was considered as only fair that he should attend them; and, in fact, whenever there was a parish contract, he always did attend them.

The following circumstance will give some insight into the working of this system:

In a populous parish, under such a contract, the surgeon was called in to a sick non-parishioner under a suspended order, and after three or four weeks' attendance, the man was removed to his own parish, with a medical bill of 14*l.* Now the salary of the surgeon was but 20*l.*; so that the charge in this case was more than two-thirds of the sum that he had consented to take for a year's attendance on all the sick poor, in a population above 3,000. If, therefore, the bill was a fair one, it proves how grossly insufficient was the salary; and if an extravagant one, how faulty the system, which not only permits, but encourages such an abuse. The sequel is, that the receiving parish refused to pay; and setting up a doubt as to the validity of the order of removal, threatened, unless the charge was greatly moderated, to appeal. The surgeon at first declined to take off more than a trifling sum, until he was informed that should the appeal be successful, the removing parish being ignorant of the pauper's settlement, must consider him their own, when the case would come within the contract, and no remuneration be due. To avoid the contingency, the surgeon accepted 5*l.*, and prevented a law suit. Mr. Lutener thinks that the evils of farming out the sick parishioners could be obviated by arrangements similar to those adopted in the army for paying for medical attendance on soldiers quartered at a distance from the military surgeon. This gentleman was the only person who suggested any remedy for the mischief; but he entered into no details, merely observing that the army plan was very complicated, and must be simplified to work well.

29 sec. of 59 G. 3,
c. 12.
Relief by way of
loans.

The 29th section of 59 Geo. 3, c. 12, enabling relief to be afforded by way of loan, is never acted on; at least, I heard of but one instance, and there the money was not repaid. But a magistrate, in Merionethshire, stated that he had known cases where it would have been advantageous for all parties had that mode of relief been adopted. It was suggested that the principle of the clause ought to be carried much further, and that all relief should be considered a loan, so far as to enable parishes, in case the parties receiving it should at any time become possessed of property, to have a claim on the property to the amount of relief granted; or if it should not be thought advisable to go this length, at least that parties having expectancies, might be placed on the same footing with pensioners, so that if it became necessary to relieve them, their expectancies should be conveyed to the parish as a security for repayment; and this whether the parties were minors or adults. A case occurred in the parish of Meivod, in Montgomeryshire, where the want of such a law was felt. Several poor infants were left a legacy of some amount, in case they survived a third person. The parish was obliged to maintain the infants during the life of such third person, upon whose death they found themselves in tolerably good circumstances, without any legal obligation to repay what had been expended on them.

THE PERSONS TO WHOM RELIEF IS GIVEN.

No lunatic asylum.

IN no part of North Wales is there any lunatic asylum or other public provision for pauper lunatics and idiots. Where the affliction is severe, and restraint necessary, the individuals are sent either to Chester or Liverpool; the milder cases are left with friends and relations, who receive from the parish 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week for their care and maintenance. This is universal, except that in the united district in Montgomeryshire and in Harwarden, there may be a few idiots and persons of weak mind relieved in the work-house, but in the former establishment this must be by a special order of the guardians or directors.

Orphan

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Esq.Orphans and
deserted children.
Apprenticeship.

The aged.

43 Eliz.

Employed single
men not relieved.Married labourers
relieved.Amount of
allowance.Relieving married,
and not unmarried
men, encourages
improvident
marriages.43 Eliz., as to
setting to work
children, and
refusing relief to
fathers.

Orphan and deserted children, if too young for work, are in like manner left with their relatives or friends; but if of a proper age, the parish places them with farmers, giving a small premium, and providing clothes for the first year or two. When the services of the child become valuable, the premium ceases, and wages commence. In rural districts this is a favourite plan, and much followed, as being not only the cheapest, but possessing the advantage of rearing the children to industrious habits, and preparing them betimes for the future occupations and duties of life. The treatment in all these cases is considered kind and proper, and no complaints were made on the subject.

Parochial apprenticeship is not very common; and, in the few cases where it takes place, it usually is of children labouring under some bodily defect. In these instances they are bound to artisans and tradesmen, selected generally by the parents or relations, and in their default, by the parish.

In Welsh Pool, however, the principle of apprenticing is one of compulsion. The method is this, a list of persons liable to receive apprentices is made out by the assistant-overseer, from which the magistrates fix, in their discretion, on those who are to take the intended apprentice; but such persons, by payment of 10*l.*, may avoid the alternative. Parish apprenticeships are growing into disuse in the principality, and one reason of this perhaps is, that the period of binding is considered too long; it is found, at least, that the apprentices frequently abscond before the expiration of the term.

The very aged are placed with their relatives and friends in the same manner as the children; sometimes, if widows, two (one younger than the other) are provided with a cottage rent-free, and are assisted in the usual methods, the younger taking care of the more aged.

In one or two parishes, such as Dolgelly and Llanykil, in Merionethshire, the impotent are put up to auction in the vestry, and farmed out to those who will maintain them on the cheapest terms. The relatives or friends of each generally become the contractors. In the latter parish, if the pauper declines to go to the person to whom he is assigned, he only receives relief to the amount that would have been paid for his board.

The clause of 43 Eliz., directing that relations, within certain degrees, if of sufficient ability, shall be assessed to the support of their poorer kindred, is sometimes, but not often, put in force. The reason usually assigned for its non-enforcement is, that the parties are not of sufficient ability.

RELIEF TO THE ABLE-BODIED.

No single able-bodied man in the employment of individuals ever obtains parochial relief; but in a great part of North Wales, if he is out of work, or in sickness, temporary assistance would be afforded. The instances, however, in which it has been found necessary to do this, are so few, that the evil consists in the existence of the principle rather than in practice.

Married agricultural labourers in work, and with only three children, although in many cases their rents are paid, and rates remitted, yet are very rarely considered entitled to regular weekly relief; but if out of work, or with more than three children, in nearly every parish they obtain it on those grounds.

The allowance is usually 1*s.* a week for each child above the third, and in apportioning this, although the vestries profess to take all the circumstances of the case into consideration, the earnings of the wife and children (if any) are seldom inquired into, except, perhaps in a manufacturing town. Overton, as appears from the evidence of Mr. Price, is the only parish I heard of entirely free from the abuse of relieving the able-bodied in the employ of individuals. It is there considered, he states, contrary to law, justice and humanity.

The rule of commencing relief with the fourth child, is, however, by no means inflexible; for example, in Kerry, a very well managed parish, a great portion of the labourers support four, five and six children, without any parochial assistance, and wages are not higher there than in many other places where it is given.

The effect of thus placing the married and unmarried man on a different footing as to relief, is clearly to encourage early and improvident marriages, with their consequent evils. Of this there was no lack of evidence; the answers to inquiries on this subject being, that such marriages are now much more common amongst the labouring and lower classes than formerly; that the great majority of young men marry under 24 years of age, and frequently under 21. That such is one of the effects of the practice, is evident from the circumstance, that in the parish of Kerry, where a married man is not certain of obtaining relief, even with five or six children, the labourers (according to the testimony of a very intelligent and long-resident magistrate, Mr. Pugh,) do not marry earlier than they did 20 or 25 years ago.

That part of the 43 Eliz. which directs parish officers to set to work the children of all such whose parents shall not be thought able to keep and maintain them, by feeding and employing such children, and refusing all other relief to the father, is quite a dead letter. Indeed the policy of enforcing the enactment was often questioned; many considering that it would not only be productive of greater expense, but interfere mischievously with parental rights and ties, and probably cause those under its influence to grow up in a confirmed

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Work rarely made
the condition of
relief.

firmed dependence on parochial assistance. Others, on the contrary, conceived, that with proper management, the children might be maintained by the parish at no greater cost than under the present system, with the advantage of being better educated than by those parents who would consent to part with them. I found the latter class of opinions to prevail.

Work is scarcely ever made the condition of relief, although the applicant may be able-bodied and unemployed; and the reason assigned is, the absence of parochial employment.

St. Asaph, Holywell, and Montgomery, are the only places I visited which form any exception to the rule. In each of these towns the able-bodied, unemployed pauper, applying for relief, is set to break stones for the roads by the job or piece, at wages rather under the current rate of the neighbourhood. The produce of the labour does not repay the expense, but the pecuniary loss (in St. Asaph it is very trifling) is more than counterbalanced by the general advantages of the plan. Thus in Montgomery, where it is regularly and strictly enforced, out of a population of nearly 1,200, there were only 29 paupers (all widows or impotent) who were receiving regular relief last year; and the assistant overseer stated, that the number that applied for occasional relief was very insignificant. The rates also evidence the excellency of the plan. If computed on the rack-rent, and omitting fractions, they are 1s. 2d. a year in the 1l.; on the population, 5s. 4d. for each person; whilst on the rack-rent of the whole county they averaged 2s. 6d. in the 1l., and on the population, 10s. 5d. for each person. Neither St. Asaph nor Holywell have been recently valued, therefore no accurate comparison can be made between them and Montgomery as to the rate on property; but in St. Asaph each person, in 1831-32, on an average, contributed 7s. 4d. a year to the relief of the poor; in Holywell, 4s. 7d.; and in the whole county of Flint, 6s. 10d.; their list of poor also, as compared with the population, is much larger than that of Montgomery, being 228 to 3,144 in St. Asaph, and 259 to 8,969 in Holywell. The latter place possesses a very intelligent assistant-overseer. The management generally is careful, and the vestry vigilant in examining the accounts; but the plan of requiring work for labour is not so regularly followed as in Montgomery or St. Asaph.

There are but few other parishes in which even the roads are made a source of employment for the unemployed able-bodied applicants for relief. According to the returns for the year ending March 1832, the whole number of persons employed, in North Wales, on the roads or in getting materials for them, and paid out of the poor-rate, was 186, of which 68 belonged to Holywell and St. Asaph; the total sum paid was 631l., of which those two parishes paid 247l. The number employed in other parochial work during that year was only 21 in the six counties, at an expense of 32l. 8s.

The want of parochial employment is much felt in Wales, and were it not for the industrious habits of the people generally, and the thinness of the population, the burthen of the poor-rate would soon become very severe.

Out-resident
paupers.

Relief to out-resident paupers, as well able-bodied as impotent, is very generally granted in North Wales, and sometimes at great distances. This, from the greater difficulty of detecting imposition, tends to encourage frauds on parochial funds more than relief given to resident paupers; and in proportion to this difficulty, is the temptation to dishonesty. It was, however, usually stated, that applications by out-paupers were seldom attended to, unless accompanied by a recommendation or voucher from some respectable person of the parish in which the pauper resided. This appears, however, to afford but little security, as the frauds practised are numerous. Many instances were mentioned to me; but without entering into particular cases, it may be sufficient to state, that the usual mode of proceeding is, for the party to inform the overseers that his wages are not sufficient to maintain him, and threaten, unless his rent be paid, or some relief afforded, to apply for assistance where he is. To prevent the return of the pauper, the relief is generally granted; although it frequently happens that he is at the time in regular work, at full wages. The constant excuse for the practice is, that the out-pauper is satisfied with less than a resident, and that having, in general, some connexion where he is, there is more likelihood of his obtaining employment there, than in his own parish.

Evidence of the
Rev. Mr. Trevor.

The vicar of Llanbeblig, and several others, strongly condemned the practice, and thought that if abolished, the dread of removal would stimulate the industry and providence of the out-dwelling poor, as many would rather forego the relief, and trust to their own exertions, than adopt the alternative. The fear entertained by country parishes of an influx of paupers, in case of its abolition, leaves, however, but little hope of voluntary amendment in this respect.

No difference in
character of settled
and non-settled
poor.

I did not observe, in the course of my inquiries, any difference in character between those who have, and those who have not settlements in the parish. In some English parishes this difference is said to be very marked, the latter being much more provident, industrious and skilful. Where the non-settled labourer receives no relief from his parish, he knows that if he wishes to remain where he is, nothing but his own exertions and prudence can enable him to do so, since to ask relief from the parish he inhabits, is to ask a removal. The practice of affording relief to out-parishioners may therefore explain why in Wales there should be no difference between the two descriptions of labourers; but at the same time it must be added, that I heard of but few instances of the settled labourers refusing work, and none of their throwing themselves out of employment in order to obtain parochial assistance.

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BASTARDY.

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THE only variety observable in the administration of the bastardy laws in North Wales, is in the amount of the sum charged on the parents for the maintenance of the child; and this ranges from 1 s. 4 d. to 2 s. a week on the father, and from 6 d. to 10 d. on the mother. In general the order is 1 s. 8 d. on the former, and 10 d. on the latter. If the mother keeps the child, she is allowed what is charged on the father, and nothing is ever demanded from her; but if it is put out to nurse, the parish bears the expense, and the woman neither receives nor pays anything, except that she is expected to furnish the child with clothes which she usually does.

Amount of
maintenance.

I met with but very few parishes in which any money was obtained from the females; and to show the trifling extent of these repayments, the parish of Llannamor, in Denbighshire, may be instanced, as it has received on this account a far larger sum than any other place that came under my observation. There the yearly average receipts from the mothers, during the last five years, have been 10 l. 12 s. for 31 bastards, or about 6 s. 10 d. per annum for each. I heard of no instance in which the female had ever been committed for nonpayment of her share of the order of maintenance; and in fact as to her, with the few exceptions just alluded to, the order is, in practice, a mere nullity. As regards the man, it is often attempted to be enforced, but seldom with much success. The largest receipts from putative fathers, as compared with the expenditure on the children, are in Overton, where the average number of illegitimate children on the books, in each of the last five years, was 28; the total expenditure during that period, 538 l., and the receipts from the fathers, 365 l., being an annual loss to the parish of 34 l. 12 s., or nearly one-ninth of the whole sum expended in the relief of the other classes of poor. Frequently not one-sixth of the bastardy expenditure is recovered, and sometimes not one-twentieth. There is a general complaint that the 49 Geo. 3, c. 68, which was intended for the indemnification of parishes, defeats its object, by requiring a demand to be made on the parent before a warrant can be obtained to enforce payment under a filiation order. The demand acts as a notice to abscond, of which, in numerous cases, the men promptly avail themselves. In St. Asaph it is stated that nearly three-fourths of the putative fathers avoid payment by this means, and the expense of pursuing and apprehending them is so great, that few parishes will incur it.

Females seldom
pay.Receipts from
putative fathers
trifling.49 G. 3, c. 68,
ineffectual to in-
demnify parishes.

The man is never punished for the offence against morality; and the female only when the magistrates consider her so depraved as to be in little danger of further corruption from the contamination of a gaol. But the magistrates are seldom called on to exercise their discretion in these cases, from the unwillingness of parish officers to prefer the necessary application. It is now thought a species of injustice to make an example of a female offender, when so many others have gone unpunished; and so far is this carried, that magistrates have actually requested overseers, in some very flagrant cases, to lodge a complaint, so as to give them jurisdiction to commit, but without success, the answer being "We do not see why she should be the first." Sir H. Browne, a magistrate of experience, speaking of the division in Flintshire for which he acted, stated that he could not call to mind three instances, during the last four years, where the woman had been punished for a second offence: and Mr. Price, a magistrate of Merionethshire, remembered only three cases in his hundred, during the last 30 years, where any punishment had taken place on this account.

Men never, and
women rarely
punished.Evidence of Sir
H. Browne and
Mr. Price.

The question, whether the allowance received by a woman for her illegitimate child repays her the expense of keeping it, does not in general arise, as in most parishes the child is put out to nurse, and the woman, as before stated, gets nothing; but in the few where she keeps it, the majority of witnesses thought that the weekly allowance is but a bare remuneration for one bastard, and that no profit accrues from two or three; many, however, were of a different opinion. Mr. Minshell, for instance, the assistant-overseer of Llangollen, states "that the allowance to a single woman in that parish is 1 s. 8 d. per week for each child; that with two children she is enabled to live better than a labourer with a family, and that her condition is considered preferable to when she had none." Where the child remains with the mother, especially in or near towns, it is frequently found that during the period of idleness usually succeeding her confinement, she is induced to repeat the offence.

Whether allowance
repays the woman.Mr. Minshell's
evidence.

The cost to parishes of each illegitimate child (after deducting the receipts from the parents) is in general under 3 l. a year. I found it smallest in Overton, where, on an average of five years, it was 1 l. 4 s. 9 d. a year; and greatest in Holyhead, and Aberhavesp, in Montgomeryshire; in the latter place, it was on a similar average 3 l. 3 s. 8 d. a year, and in the former, according to the evidence of the assistant-overseer, about 4 l.

Average expense of
maintenance to
parishes.

Bastardy is a growing evil in Wales. The laws on this subject were universally condemned, not only as inefficient to indemnify the parish, and repress the mischief, but as operating directly to cause its increase. I found, that in practice, so far from punishing the female, they intercept one of the punishments naturally consequential on the offence, the burthen of supporting the child; they hold out to her, if not a pecuniary reward, in many instances, the powerful aid of parish officers in obtaining a husband; they effect, and often by the most shameful practices, marriages which ought to have been discountenanced; they encourage perjury on the woman's part, to the injury and disgrace of innocent persons; they convert into vagrants and dissolute characters, many of the indus-

Bastardy in-
creasing.The effects pro-
duced by the
present laws.

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Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Improper marriages, mode of effecting.

Instance.

trious; and worse than all, they tend to induce the crime of abortion, from the interest they give the man in preventing a birth, which presents the alternative of a prison, or (to him) a heavy weekly expense. Instances were mentioned to me of applications to medical practitioners, by males, for drugs for this purpose.

A detail of all the instances adduced to exemplify the operation of these laws, would be tedious, but on the subject of improper marriages it may be observed that where the female is of a different parish to the male, the officers of her parish, upon default in payment under the order of maintenance (to use the expression of one of my informants), sometimes "take the woman in one hand and a warrant in the other, and give the man the option of going to church, or to gaol." An aggravated case of this sort was related to me by a clergyman, where a man to whom a child had been affiliated by a woman of loose character, in order to avoid the imprisonment with which he was threatened, consented to marry her; but lest he should change his mind and abscond before a special licence was obtained, he was kept under lock and key, and ultimately led *handcuffed* to the church-door. As soon as the ceremony was over he quitted the neighbourhood. The object, however, was gained in the transfer of the female's settlement to another parish. An indictment was preferred against the parties concerned, but the case was compromised.

Custom of bundling.

Female does not lose her character.

The amount and increase of bastardy is not wholly attributable to the state of the law. The custom of bundling, or courting in bed, is also a powerful cause. This custom prevails over all North Wales, except in the parts immediately bordering on the English counties: and as it is the way in which all courtships amongst the lower class have been carried on from time immemorial, it is not considered by them either immoral or indecent. If the female is likely to become a mother, it is understood that the man is bound in honour to make her his wife; but as in many cases he fails to do this, the result adds to the bastardy list. The woman, however, does not lose her character, at least for the first offence; she obtains a service, and even gets married as easily, or very nearly so, as before. As an instance of this, in the parish of Machynlleth, out of 10 cases on the books, six of the women were subsequently married to men who were not the fathers of their children, and only two, as far as it was known, are now single. So powerful is the custom, that many gentlemen state, that they must either overlook the fact of their female servants giving in to it, or make up their minds to employ only men servants, or old women. The evidence of the clergy, too, is equally indicative of the great extent to which it is carried. One gentleman stated that in 49 out of every 50 marriages that he had been called on to perform in his parish, amongst the lower orders, the female was either with child, or had had one; and many affirmed this of 19 out of 20 cases.

Notwithstanding this custom, I think on the whole, that the Welsh females of the lower class are more moral than the females of the same grade in a great part of England. They will in general consent to bundle only with those from whom marriage may be expected, therefore only with those of their own rank. Infidelity in conjugal life is rare, even amongst such as were not of correct conduct previous to marriage; and what at first may appear strange, comparatively few women offend twice, so that prostitution is not common. The difference in this respect between the English and Welsh female arises doubtless from this, that in England when a woman once offends she loses her caste and continues to sink from a hopelessness of regaining her position in society; but in Wales public opinion amongst the lower classes rather takes part with the woman for the first offence, which is called "an accident," "a misfortune," or some other mild term, and she is treated by her friends and acquaintances as before: the same motives, therefore, for self-abandonment do not exist in the one case as in the other.

Remedies suggested.

The heavy expense which parishes sustained on account of bastardy, is borne with more reluctance and discontent than all the rest of the expenditure on the poor put together; and wherever I went, many outlines of plans were suggested to remedy the evil: one, that if the man is to continue liable for the maintenance of the child, the parish should be empowered to apprehend him for any arrears, *without previous demand*, and to keep him in prison until the debt was paid: another, that he should be obliged to give security for the payment of the sums charged on him by the filiation order, and in default, be committed. This plan is in operation in the parish of Llangerniew, in Denbighshire, where they proceed under the 18 Eliz. c. 3, and commit the man unless security be given to perform the order, or to appeal against it. The result, it is stated, is successful, as the expenses of bastardy are now two-thirds less than they were seven years ago, when the plan was not in operation. Another remedy suggested is, that the woman should be transported for seven years for the second offence: another, that she and her bastard should be chargeable to the parish in which she became pregnant, whereby masters and mistresses would have an interest in attending to the morals and conduct of their servants, and the present disgraceful practices of parish officers prevented: another, that it should be *imperative* on the authorities to punish the man and woman severely by imprisonment and hard labour, and the former more so than the latter: and another, that in default of security being given to indemnify the parish, both parents should become parish servants, to be let out to hire until a sufficient fund be raised to form such indemnity. All these plans, if free from other objections, are only partial in their operation, and do not meet half the evils.

But

But the remedy which the majority of witnesses thought would meet most, if not all of the present evils, would be to *repeal* the bastardy laws, and to make it unnecessary for parishes to interfere with illegitimate children, except they were orphans or deserted.

The application of such a remedy to a first offence in North Wales, may perhaps seem too harsh, from the appearance of hardship in punishing one, whose fall a national custom may have greatly contributed to effect. But for a second or subsequent offence this could not be urged; and on the whole, I think the plan might be beneficially adopted. The natural consequences of misconduct would then be its punishment, and the motives for prudence, on the woman's part, rendered as powerful as they could now be made.

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

I met with a striking instance, which proves that the female in these cases is generally the party most to blame; and that any remedy, to be effectual, must act chiefly with reference to her. In 1823, the then overseer of the parish of Machynlleth, who was represented to be of a strict and resolute character, made known his determination to punish every single-woman offending in this way, and he kept his word; the consequence was, that in the two years succeeding his year of office, not one case of bastardy occurred in the parish; but in the third year, when the terror of his reign had somewhat abated, the evil recommenced with one case, and no punishment following, gradually increased to its former level.

Desertion of children, and infanticide, were objections sometimes urged against the plan; but the great majority of clergymen, magistrates, and others, whom I examined on the subject, thought that the former would not be more frequent than at present; and that abortion and infanticide would be less frequent, not only from there being fewer cases to give rise to them, but because the man, who in most instances is now the first to suggest these crimes, especially that of abortion, and to assist in their execution, would no longer have an interest in doing so; and the female left to herself, from maternal feelings, and natural timidity, would seldom make the hazardous attempt of destroying her offspring. The repeal of the present laws would likewise deprive the man of a plea of great weight with the female, namely, that if she is likely to become a mother, he shall be compelled to marry her, or go to prison.

MAGISTRATES.

MAGISTRATES are but thinly scattered over this part of the principality, and the great majority are clergymen; of whom many stated that it was with much reluctance they consented to join the two characters, knowing that the one would interfere with the other. A clergyman finds it difficult to act independently as a magistrate: if he carries the law to its length, or pursues what may appear rigorous or even unkind measures, though it be to ensure ultimate good, he is thought to have trenched on the merciful or charitable feelings, which are considered to belong so peculiarly to the sacred office, and injures himself with the humbler classes of his parishioners. This renders a clerical magistrate less likely to be economical in the distribution of the parish funds than a layman. They will err rather on the side of liberality, than on that of niggardliness. Under existing circumstances, however, the evil in Wales is nearly unavoidable, as there are but few qualified laymen, except in or near towns, who will act. Should the clergy therefore also refuse, great inconvenience would arise from a want of justices, which even now is sometimes felt in the rural districts; as in Llangefni, in Anglesea, where I was informed by a magistrate, it is occasionally a matter of some difficulty to assemble a petty sessions.

Chiefly clergymen.

The Welsh magistracy, although they do not interfere with the management of the poor to the same extent that many of the English justices are said to do, yet as a body, they consider themselves the guardians of the poor, or, as it is frequently expressed, "the poor man's best friend." They have not, however, in any instance framed any scale for the apportionment of relief, but decide on each case according to circumstances. Their interference in this respect is not so much by direct orders as by recommendations, which few overseers hesitate to obey; but when they do make orders, they generally pay some attention to the character and cause of distress of the applicant; the apparent intensity of the distress is, however, the main consideration. Many of them, with a laudable desire to save expense to parishes, transact this kind of magisterial business without the intervention of a clerk; but their orders are frequently irregular and illegal; they are nevertheless almost always obeyed. I observed that in parishes with a resident magistrate, this interference was less than in those without one, as in the parishes of Kerry and St. Asaph; and I further observed, that where the interference was little, the labouring class appeared to rely more on their own exertions, and the paupers to be fewer and more contented, than where it was much. In Montgomery, for instance, there is less pauperism for the amount of population (1,188) than in any place I met with; the number of weekly paupers, as before stated, being only 29, and the sums spent in occasional relief very trifling. Indeed the whole expenditure on account of the poor in 1831 was but 319 *l*. No one is out of employment, and all seem content. The assistant-overseer states that the magistrate never interferes, and that he remembers only one order to have been made in 14 years, which he refused to obey, as the applicant had not previously applied to the vestry, which is select, and had imposed on the magistrate.

Their interference
in management of
the poor.

No scale.

Interference chiefly
by recommenda-
tions.When magistrate
resident, inter-
ference less.

The dissolute and worst description of paupers seldom apply for relief to the magistrate residing in or near their parish, but prefer going to one at a distance, who they know is less likely to be acquainted with their circumstances, and to detect false statements. This plan does not, however, always succeed, as there appears to exist in this part of the king-

Dissolute paupers
prefer applying to
magistrates at a
distance.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Instances of
interference by
non-resident
magistrates.

dom a feeling of courtesy which often restrains magistrates from interfering in the affairs of a parish in or near which there is a resident justice competent to act. Instances to the contrary, however, are to be found, two of which I will mention, as they exemplify more points than one in the administration and operation of the poor laws, and show the necessity for some restriction on magisterial power. The first case was that of a young man, in Denbighshire, who was maintained in idleness by his father, a pauper receiving regular relief. The overseers conceiving that a single man, able to work, ought not to be supported indirectly by the parish, refused to continue the relief to the father while he encouraged the son in idleness. This irritated the latter, who was heard to say, that he knew how he could get relief, and at the same time be revenged on the parish. His plan was a simple one; he immediately married a pregnant pauper of the neighbouring parish, and then demanded relief, on the ground of his being a married man. It was refused. He applied to a magistrate distant about three miles, passing over the magistrate residing in the parish, but with no better success; he then proceeded to a magistrate 12 miles off, who, although made acquainted with the facts by the vestry-clerk, granted an order on the parish to allow the pauper 5 s. a week, and to provide him with a cottage rent-free. The man is stated to be a profligate character, and to have refused work when offered him.

The next case occurred in the same county, in a parish possessing a select vestry. The facts, part of which I copied from a statement in the parish books, and the remainder I had from the assistant-overseer, are as follows: *E. J.*, a widow, with two children, had been allowed by the vestry 2 s. a week; but being discontented with this, she applied to the petty sessions of the place to increase the allowance, which they declined to do. She afterwards attended a petty sessions in a neighbouring parish; but the assistant-overseer happening to be present, she would not then bring forward her case, saying, she could "get her ends at a meeting when he was not present." She subsequently went to a magistrate, whose residence was out of the hundred, and obtained an order on the overseers for 4 s. a week, or to show cause, in case of refusal. On this the vestry met, and drew up the statement alluded to, setting forth these facts; and that the pauper, besides her weekly allowance of 2 s., had a furnished room provided for her by the parish; that she could make four or five pairs of list shoes a day; that she was a woman of dissolute and loose habits; and that her allowance was fully equal to that of any widow in the parish in similar circumstances, and then concluded thus: "The members of this select Vestry beg most respectfully to lay the above state of facts before * * * for his further consideration; and trust that it will be considered by him that the above-named *E. J.* will be found a person not deserving an additional allowance." This was signed by nine vestrymen, only one of whom was a parish officer. On the day appointed, the assistant-overseer attended the magistrate with the statement, and with two witnesses to prove the truth of its contents; he likewise produced a certificate from the overseers of the parish in which the magistrate resided, stating, that able widows, with two children, were only allowed 1 s. 8 d. per week; and further, a written offer from a master manufacturer, to employ again one of the children of the pauper, who had been previously in his service, but was dismissed on account of idleness. All was useless; the magistrate confirmed his order, without even hearing, it is said, the overseer, or his witnesses. These cases require no comment.

Opinions as to
stipendiary
magistrates.

Opinions respecting the policy of a stipendiary magistracy were conflicting. In towns and populous places, it was thought extremely desirable to have a person fitted by a legal education to administer the poor laws, and preside at petty sessions; and it was suggested, that to ensure the requisite qualifications, and to prevent partiality, he should be appointed by three or more of the judges, that he should be itinerant, removable in case of unfitness or misconduct, and paid by Government, so as to render him as much as possible independent of local influences; and further, to insure the latter point, some thought that the circuit assigned to each should from time to time be changed. Many magistrates, especially amongst the clergy, state that they would with cheerfulness resign the portion of duties now imposed on them by the poor laws, in favour of an officer of this description.

In rural districts the plan was considered objectionable, as it was thought there would be too little business to make it worth the expense, if the district assigned was small, and if large, there might be great inconveniences in pressing cases.

It was difficult to obtain more than a hasty opinion, without reasons, on the plan, as it had rarely been previously considered. Something of the kind however seems necessary, if it were only to have a chairman of the petty sessions; for the magistrates, with but very few exceptions, know nothing of law, and often find themselves at a loss to interpret Acts of Parliament, especially the recent ones, where they have not even the assistance of a treatise on the subject. In all these cases, their sole reliance is on their clerk; an attorney, it is true, but who often needs assistance as much as those whom he is appointed to assist. Strange law is sometimes promulgated in these courts. One gentleman, a magistrate of standing and repute in his hundred, stated "that Acts of Parliament could not in many cases, he thought, be carried into effect, were it not for the *corrective power* which magistrates possessed in construing and applying them."

VESTRIES.

No local Acts.

Select vestries more
common formerly
than now.

I MET with no local Acts for the management of parochial concerns, except in the incorporated district in Montgomeryshire, and in the two parishes in Denbighshire, under the control of the workhouse at Chester. The vestries, therefore, when select, are so under the 59 Geo. 3, c. 12. This Act appears to have been rather generally adopted in North Wales, shortly after it passed; but in the majority of the country parishes, it was discontinued,

tinued, after one or two years' trial. The reason commonly assigned for the change is, that when meetings were held once a fortnight, as required by the Act, the paupers were sure also to attend, and by their importunities seldom failed to obtain some relief; besides the annoyance, the frequency of this, became expensive to the parish, and it was found easier to forego the vestry than withstand the importunity. Another reason given is, that all who would attend under a select vestry, would probably do so under an open one; but that many who would attend under the latter, were excluded by the former. And further, that in rural districts, the attendance was often so thin, that it was found necessary to open the vestry to all rate-payers. The restrictions which select vestries often placed on jobbing and favouritism, had probably some influence in restoring the old system: and this supposition is supported by the generally admitted facts, that the parish affairs were as well, if not better, managed under the select system; that economy was more strictly practised; and that, after all, the attendance was just as good as in the open vestry, unless some private end is to be carried. The supposition is strengthened by what occurred in Machynlleth. In 1823, under an open vestry, the sum spent on the poor was 639*l.*; in 1824, under a select vestry, it was only 439*l.**; and the vestry clerk, who was one of the overseers in 1824, states, that the poor were as well provided for in the latter as in the former year. In 1825, the vestry was again open, and the expenditure immediately increased. This change is thus accounted for: Under the open system, the overseers were always shopkeepers, or relations of shopkeepers; and the poor, instead of receiving relief in money, were obliged to take it in goods, which of course gave the overseers a direct interest in an extravagant expenditure on the poor. The select vestry would not permit this abuse, and therefore, fell under the displeasure of the shopkeepers and their immediate connexions, who effected its abolition. In 1829, however, a select vestry was again appointed, and still exists with advantage to the parish, and to the poor, who now receive relief in money.

Select vestries seldom meet for business oftener than once a month; open vestries only when occasion requires, not more than three or four times a year in the mountainous and some of the country parishes. It is a general rule, indeed, to assemble as seldom as possible, in order to avoid the importunities of paupers, who, it is said, would always discover that they wanted something if the vestry was to meet daily. When vestries meet.

The vestry system, the proper constitution and working of which are of such vital importance in the due administration of the poor laws, is in Wales subject to many abuses, and stands in need of reform. The attendance is in general very thin, although the inducement of ale, at the expense of the parish, is in numerous places held out. This practice, however, many of the magistrates endeavour to abolish, by objecting to pass accounts containing such an item, but not always with success, as the charge is made under another name. With a few exceptions, vestries meet generally at night and frequently at public-houses, by which means the clergymen and most respectable rate-payers are deterred from attending. The nature of the jobbing and favouritism that in consequence usually takes place in open vestries, will in some measure be seen from the following evidence. "Many who are but little removed from a state of pauperism, (says the assistant-overseer of Llangollen,) frequently attend open vestries only to procure relief for paupers with whom I have no doubt they are in league to share it; and it is certain that there is often a mutual understanding between several of the small rate-payers to vote together whenever any of them wishes to carry a point in favour of a pauper connexion, or other private end." The vicar of Bangor also states, that he knows "proprietors of pauper cottages in that town, who attend the vestry on purpose to support the claim of their tenants to have their rents paid by the parish, or some other relief given them." In these cases no money passes, the landlord promises to settle with his tenant, and he has credit for the amount in the next rate, voting, in fact, so much money into his own pocket. Many others gave testimony to the same effect; but these mal-practices are so notorious in Wales, that it is needless to dwell further on them. Meetings usually at night.
Consequences.
Evidence.

From the strong temptation which the lower class of rate-payers have to abuse the privilege, it was generally considered not advisable to allow a vote in respect of tenements under a certain annual value; but the proposition of giving one to landlords of property above that value, although not rated, was highly approved of, from its tendency to ensure economical and good management, and a more respectable assembly; not so, however, was that of allowing them to vote by proxy, as it was considered likely to lessen the attendance, besides compromising the essence of a vestry, its deliberative character. An enactment prohibiting vestries from transacting business after a certain hour in the forenoon, and from meeting in public-houses, was considered by all the most respectable witnesses to be absolutely necessary; and many suggested that a proper attendance should be enforced by a small fine. Nor was this thought more objectionable than the compulsory service required on juries, in the militia, and in parish offices. As to who should possess a vote.

North

* These sums are taken from the parish books, but they do not correspond with Parliamentary Poor-rate Returns, which, I may here observe, are very inaccurately made out; some parishes inserting items under the head expended on the poor, which others omit. The salary of the assistant-overseer is an example of this.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Decision of vestries
as to relief often
influenced by fear
of magistrate's
order.

As to making
decisions final.

North Wales contains about 315 parishes*, of which 12 are partly in the adjoining English counties of Salop and Chester, and four extra-parochial places. The number of select vestries, according to the Poor's-rate Return for the year ending March 1832, is 75.

Vestries decide on the amount of the rate necessary to be raised, and they adjudge how it is to be distributed; but in the apportionment of relief to paupers, their decisions are frequently influenced by the fear of a magistrate's order. It is difficult, merely on the balance of opinions, to determine whether making these decisions final would be beneficial or otherwise. "Great hardships," "dreadful suffering," and "intolerable oppression" to the poor, are the results anticipated by many; others again, and perhaps the majority, had no fear of this, and considered that such a change would introduce a sounder discrimination on the part of vestries in awarding relief, and cause more attention to be paid to the character of the applicant, and the causes of his distress, than these points at present command. A third party thought that the appeal should be taken from the magistrates as a body, and lodged in some resident or residents in the parish, who should possess a knowledge of the habits and feelings of the poor, and, at the same time, an interest in avoiding a careless expenditure.

My own observations did not lead me to think that the hardship and oppression so much dreaded would ensue, if the decisions of vestries in matters of relief were made final. In those parishes where there was no magisterial interference with such decisions, I did not find that the impotent and deserving poor had less allowance, or were treated more rigorously or unkindly than where the vestries were not independent. At the same time it must be added, that in the instances I allude to, besides the knowledge that a power of interference still existed, the clergyman or some other gentleman generally attended the vestry, which was more respectably constituted than in most of the country parishes.

OVERSEERS.

Plan in Bodedern.

THESE officers very rarely serve more than a year at a time. In one instance I met with a custom, that the churchwardens should in the succeeding year be overseers; and even this was found to be an improvement on the annual system. In the parish of Bodedern, in Anglesea, the mode of determining who are to be overseers is singular. A list was, in 1811, made out by a general vestry, of all the farms and holdings in the parish, and they were so arranged that holdings in opposite parts of the parish should follow each other on the list. In the first year the occupiers of the two first on the list were the overseers, and so on in rotation till 1836, when the list will expire. Whatever may be the advantages of the plan, it has not the merit of selecting individuals from their fitness for the office.

Annual overseers
inefficient.

As a body, I found annual overseers wholly incompetent to discharge the duties of their office, either from the interference of private occupations, or from a want of experience and skill; but most frequently from both these causes. Their object is to get through the year with as little unpopularity and trouble as possible; their successors therefore have frequently to complain of demands left unsettled, and rates uncollected, either from carelessness or a desire to gain the trifling popularity of having called for fewer assessments than usual. In rural districts the overseers are farmers; in towns generally shopkeepers; and in villages usually one of each of those classes. The superiority of salaried assistant-overseers is admitted wherever they exist, and in nearly all the instances where a select vestry has fallen into desuetude, the assistant-overseer has been retained. This circumstance is so strong in favour of their usefulness, and of the inefficiency of annual officers, that scarce anything farther need be said on the subject. I will however add one more fact. In the parish of Kerry, where the assistant-overseer was discarded with the vestry, an immediate increase in the expenditure took place. In the year ending March 1830, with an assistant-overseer, the gross sum spent, exclusive of county rates, was 1,520*l.*, whilst in each of the years 1831 and 1832, with an annual officer, it was 1,811*l.* All whom I examined attributed this increase to the loss of the assistant-overseer. In short, so bad is the annual system considered, that an enactment was frequently proposed for compelling all parishes to appoint and remunerate permanent overseers, to be removable in case of unfitness or misconduct. It was also suggested, that it should be imperative, instead of optional, on the proper authorities to take security from these officers against the loss and misapplication of parochial funds.

Paid assistant-
overseers.

The parties who in general resist the appointment of a salaried assistant-overseer in parishes without one, are the little farmers, and others who have already served the office. They do not consider it fair, as they state, that they should be at any expense to save others the trouble which they have undergone without remuneration.

117 assistant
overseers.

In this part of the kingdom overseers, whether annual or permanent, have in practice but little independent action; they are simply the servants of the vestry, and do nothing of their own authority, except affording temporary relief between the meetings of vestry. The number of assistant-overseers in North Wales, according to the late returns, was 117.

* The counties of Sussex and Gloucester contain two or three more parishes than the whole of North Wales, and Norfolk nearly as many again, viz. 627.

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Appendix (A.)

ACCOUNTS.

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

IN parishes possessing paid assistant-overseers, the accounts are more clearly and regularly kept than elsewhere. There are frequently four books; one for the weekly payments, a second for bastardy expenses, a third a day-book, in which the occasional relief and other parochial expenditure is entered, and the fourth a ledger, kept under the heads of weekly pay, nurse's or bastard's pay, and occasional relief or disbursements, and often a separate head for rents. This book also contains a yearly balance sheet of the receipts and payments. In mountainous and retired parishes, only one book is kept in addition to the weekly pay-book; and the entries are sometimes made in a mixture of Welsh and English, as in the parish of Beddgelert.

The accounts are usually made up and audited only once a year. In St. Asaph, Holywell, Wrexham, and one or two other places in Flintshire and Denbighshire, a balance sheet of the yearly receipts and payments, and the names of those who have been relieved, with the amount granted to each, is printed and distributed amongst the rate-payers. This practice has been only of recent introduction; but of such advantage is it considered, that the parishes adjoining those where it exists are beginning to adopt it. The printing and distributing a list of those receiving relief often brings to light cases of imposition, which otherwise would have remained undetected; besides which, the paupers seem to dislike the exposure, as in some instances they have given up a part or the whole of their relief to prevent it. The printed accounts of St. Asaph contain the following entry: "Sundry paupers, who rather than be classed, (that is, put in the printed list,) pay part of their rent." And in another parish a pauper ceased to apply for relief on learning that his name had been thus published.

Audited only once
a year.Printing a list of
paupers.

A change in the existing mode of examining and passing parish accounts is much desired. It is objected, and with truth, that at present there is no uniformity in the practice of the magistrates; items being allowed in one district that are disallowed in another, and every where accounts are passed with charges which the law does not sanction: for example, in the mountainous districts 10 s. are allowed out of the poor-rate for every fox that is killed; in some parishes there is a salary to the mole-catcher, (in Northop it is 40 l. per annum for 21 years); and I have seen a charge for providing a substitute for one of the parishioners who had been drawn for the militia. The accounts, too, are sometimes as inaccurate as they are illegal. Mr. Thomas, the clerk to the directors of the Forden House of Industry, states that he has examined several which have been passed by vestry and magistrates, and found them very incorrect and fraudulent. It was frequently suggested, that for the purpose of auditing and passing parochial accounts, the county or Government should appoint district officers, who might be paid by a per-centage on each account. A large saving is expected, if this or some other similar plan be adopted, and if parishes be furnished with an uniform outline of accounts, to which they should be bound to adhere.

Present mode of
passing accounts
objectionable.District auditor
proposed.

In select vestries the auditing of accounts is much more regular and strict than in open vestries; in the latter there is a feeling that as a disagreeable and unpaid office has been forced on the overseer, he ought not to be rigorously treated.

SETTLEMENTS.

THE expense and suffering occasioned by the laws of settlement, have brought them into general odium, and some great alteration, not only in their details but in their principles, was universally called for.

At present a poor man cannot, by his own act, and without the consent of third parties, interested in preventing it, *acquire* any settlement. Hence the number of removals, the checks to free circulation of labour, and the heavy complaints of rural parishes that those who left them in youth and vigour are thrown back on them for support in decrepitude and impotency.

The heads of settlement which appear to create the most inconvenience in Wales, are hiring and service, parentage, and apprenticeships; I heard very little of the others.

A strong proof of the impolicy of the first head, is, that in practice it has been extensively repealed. This is the case in Anglesea, Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire, where the hirings are but for six months. Indeed, the labourers themselves sometimes object to be hired for a year; and a gentleman in Anglesea instanced to me his gardener, who had refused to be hired otherwise than by the week, although a contract for 12 months certain was offered him. He gave as his reason, that the parish in which he was then settled was more liberal in its allowance to the poor than the one wherein his master resided, and that he would not, therefore, change his settlement. Now, here was a man in the vigour of youth and strength, and possessing skill which would always command higher wages and a steadier employment than ordinary, actually looking forward to becoming a parish pauper, and nicely calculating upon which parish it was most advantageous to quarter himself. This shows the lamentable tendency of the poor laws to destroy all reliance on self-exertion and habits of providence amongst the labouring classes.

Hiring and service.

In Montgomeryshire, Flintshire and Denbighshire, single men are generally hired by the year, if parishioners, and married labourers by the week. I nowhere found that masters took advantage of the law to get rid of labourers settled in their parish, or for any such fraudulent purposes.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Apprenticeships.

There is but little binding out of apprentices in North Wales, and, therefore, a proportionably small amount of inconvenience. The chief complaints under this head are on account of the numerous, and, as it is thought, unnecessarily intricate formalities, which are required to render the binding valid, the non-observance of which often gives rise to litigation.

Parishes in which there is a port, complain much of the great difficulty and expense incurred in determining the place of settlement of a sailor apprentice, and of the frequency of perjury on the part of the sailor, who, to settle himself at a favourite port, is often induced, from the difficulty of detection, to swear that he there completed the last of the requisite 40 days.

Parentage.

Settlements are rarely *acquired* in North Wales, especially in Anglesea, Carnarvonshire, and Merionethshire. It results, therefore, that parentage is a head of frequent occurrence. Now, considering that the great majority of the people in this part of the kingdom are Dissenters, and consequently that the parish registers supply but little evidence of their baptisms, &c., the difficulty and expense of tracing a pedigree through the paternal and maternal lines, to ascertain, if possible, which of the ancestors had *acquired* a settlement, will be readily imagined. Mr. Williams, the chairman of the quarter sessions in Anglesea, and a practising barrister, observes on this point, "that settlement has now become a matter of pedigree, and that a statute, limiting the extent to which they should be traced, is, or soon will be, necessary."

There is one class of cases in which the settlement laws are productive of peculiar suffering, from their reciprocal action on England and Wales. Mr. Jones, of Llynnon in Anglesea, a magistrate, mentioned several cases of this description; but it will be sufficient to state the general outline of them all. An Englishman comes into Wales, marries, has a large family, and dies without having acquired a settlement. The widow, finding herself unable to support the children, applies for relief, and is removed to her husband's settlement in some distant English county. Here is not only the painfulness of a separation from all her relatives and connexions, but she is sent to pass her old age amongst another people, whose habits and customs are strange to her, and whose language she can neither speak nor understand. But the converse of this case is still worse: the English widow may, in addition, have to exchange the comparatively mild climate, the wheaten bread, good fare, and comforts of an English cottage, for the bleak atmosphere, oaten cake, and potatoes and milk, of some mountainous parish in Wales. Transportation would almost be a lighter punishment, as in the colonies her native language would be spoken, and the fare probably better than in the mother country.

The Irish and Scotch very rarely settle in Wales.

Remedy proposed.

The great majority of those whom I examined on the subject, advocated the abolition of all heads of settlements, except birth, parentage and marriage, but as these alone would rather increase the number of cases of the description just alluded to, and would leave villages more exposed than under the existing law, to the return, in old age and infirmity, of such as had exhausted their youth and vigour in the service of other places, some mode of *acquiring* a settlement with greater facility than at present, is considered necessary; and the more especially if parentage be retained, in order to lessen the number of cases in which it is necessary to resort to ancestors for a settlement. The mode almost always suggested is a residence for three or more years, without being chargeable to the parish or absent from it, beyond a certain time during the period*. There is some difficulty in fixing upon a suitable term; if a short one is taken, towns would be too much burthened: and if a long one, it would defeat its object, especially where the state of employment is fluctuating. The allowing a certain absence during the term, would probably create some expense and difficulty, from the attempts which would be made to defeat the settlement by proof of an absence beyond the specified time. Another mode of acquiring a settlement frequently proposed was service for a year, without reference to any hiring. This, however, leaves the matter entirely in the hands of the master, and would tend to prevent steady employment.

But whatever changes may be made in these laws, the result of my inquiries warrants the statement that none will be considered satisfactory unless the head of hiring and service be abolished. Several persons stated, that if the labours of the Commissioners should produce no other result than this, they still would ensure the thanks of the community.

ACQUISITION OF LAND BY LABOURERS.

THE occupation of land by the labouring part of the population of Wales is not greater at present than it was several years back. Very few labourers are the proprietors of the cottages in which they live; but where it is otherwise, they have generally acquired their title by encroachment on commons or wastes, and an undisturbed possession of more than 20 years.

There is no copyhold tenure in North Wales, at least such is the testimony of the professional men I examined; and leases are rare, even of large farms; but tenants, though only from year to year, are seldom disturbed, and the same lands frequently continue in a family for

* I do not notice the plan of Mr. Maughan, as he has himself explained it in a pamphlet which is before the Board.

for many generations. A farmer informed me that the farm he held as a yearly tenant had been occupied in the same manner by his ancestors during the last 200 years.

The parish of Llandigai, in Carnarvonshire, is an exception to the non-leasing rule; but the circumstances there are peculiar. The whole of the parish except the glebe belongs to one individual, Mr. Pennant, and in it, is situated the largest slate quarry in Wales, which employs nearly 1,600 men. This gentleman has granted leases to many of his workmen, for 25 or 30 years, of small pieces of ground sufficient for a house and a garden of about one-fourth of an acre. The workman builds his own cottage and pays an annual ground rent of a few shillings. The condition of these men is far superior to that of any labourers that I saw, except perhaps in Kerry; but then they have constant employment, and receive much better wages than other labourers; besides which, their children from the age of eight can earn something in the quarry. A strong proof of their prosperity and good state of moral and religious feeling is, that there was recently collected from them in one year 72 *l.* for the Bible Society, 31 *l.* for the Church Missionary Society and 27 *l.* under the King's letters.

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Llandigai.

Quarry-men.

A few leases for lives are occasionally met with, chiefly in Montgomeryshire, which have been granted by the lords of manors with from 5 to 15 acres of land; not enough to make the tenants farmers, and too much to permit them to be labourers. On comparing the condition of these small freeholders with that of labourers, who have only just sufficient land to occupy their leisure time, the result is greatly in favour of the latter. My own observation was confirmed by the testimony of others. Mr. Davies, the rector of Aberhavesp, stated that in his "neighbourhood, several persons had obtained leases for lives of a few acres of land which had been recently enclosed, and that the majority of them are now actually in a worse condition than paupers. They trust solely to the produce of the land, and if there is a bad season, or they are improvident, which is often the case, in the consumption of a short crop, they are reduced to a dreadful condition, as the possession of the land operates against their obtaining parochial relief."

A few small
freeholders.Evidence of the
Rev. Mr. Davies.

The quantity of land which a labourer can beneficially occupy, without interfering with his ordinary labour, is admitted, with scarcely an exception, to be about one quarter of an acre, and certainly not more than half an acre. I examined, on this subject, several small farmers who, from working on their own land as labourers, were the best judges of the matter; and in giving the testimony of one or two, I in effect give that of all. A farmer of the parish of Guildsfield, in Montgomeryshire, stated that a labourer could not do justice to his master and the land, if he had more than half an acre, and that he must be a very industrious and good workman, and be assisted by his wife and family, to work up even that quantity, which he thought was too much. He added, that if he wanted a labourer, and two men, equally strong and equally skilful, were to apply, one of whom had a quarter of an acre, and the other, one or two acres of land, he should without hesitation prefer the former. A farmer in Kerry likewise stated, that if a labourer had more than a quarter of an acre, he is not a valuable servant, since he is apt to curtail the time which belongs to his master, in order to attend his own land; this he said, he had found to be the case. The Rev. Mr. Jones, of Treiorworth, in Anglesea, says on this point, that he is the owner of several cottages let to labourers, and he finds that he has committed an error in giving to each half an acre, as they rely too much on the land, to their own detriment.

What quantity of
land should be
attached to a
labourer's cottage.Evidence of
farmers.Of the Rev.
Mr. Jones.

Over the greater part of North Wales the labourers are permitted, on payment of so much a bushel, either in money or in kind, to plant as many potatoes as they may need, on the fallow land of the farmer, who in most instances manures and prepares it ready for use. If the labourer finds manure, which is sometimes the case where a pig is kept, he has the use of the land without any charge. The plan is advantageous to both parties; the labourer obtains a crop at a cheaper rate than if he rented in the usual way and manured the land, and the farmer, besides the remuneration in money, produce, or manure, has his ground carefully cleaned and better fitted to receive a crop, after the potatoes are reaped, than if it had continued fallow.

Labourers permit-
ted to plant
potatoes on farmers'
fallow land.

Where a labourer was possessed of a small portion of land, sufficient, and not more than sufficient, to occupy his leisure time, and furnish his children with employment, I found a striking improvement in the general condition of the whole family. The children were early and practically taught the beneficial effects of industry, and the man appeared to be more contented with his lot, and had less inducement to keep loose company. From what I witnessed, therefore, I cannot too strongly recommend that every facility should be granted to encourage the occupation of land to this extent, by the labouring classes. The measure was warmly advocated by all ranks, and is universally popular; but at the same time, no specific means were pointed out, which would promote it or guard against the danger of creating an over numerous cottier population.

Condition of
labourer, with a
small portion of
land, much
improved.

In no part of North Wales is any difference made in the wages of the single and married labourer; but the latter is frequently preferred as the steadier and more skilful workman; his wages are generally 8*s.* per week in the winter, and 9*s.* in the summer, or sometimes 9*s.* all the year round; in each case, however, without meat or drink, except in the harvest time, when they are added, or the wages increased. In general the married man is hired by the week only, and in this respect the single men (called servants) have the advantage, being usually hired by the year or six months, according to the custom of the county. The servants receive from 3*l.* to 6*l.* a year, and almost always board and lodge with their employers, if farmers.

No difference in
wages of married
and single men.

Amount of wages.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Income of an
average labourer.

Usual fare of
labourers.

Savings banks and
benefit societies.

I did not therefore find that the residence of agricultural labourers with their employers was at all prevented or diminished, in consequence of the tax on domestic servants.

The annual income of an average agricultural labourer in North Wales, with only an average amount of employment, is about 20*l.* or 21*l.*: some put it higher; but I think the sums just mentioned are nearer accuracy. The wife and children seldom add much to the man's earnings; and it is considered well if the boys under 14 obtain their food from the farmer in exchange for service.

The fare of the lower classes, including the small farmers, is coarse and low compared to that of the English labourer; except on the borders of England and in towns, it consists of potatoes and milk, oaten or barley bread, with a little bacon, not oftener in general than once a week, and in some districts salted herrings. Fresh meat is very rarely obtained, and beer but seldom. The use of this beverage, however, has been extended of late by the introduction of beer-shops, against which sad complaints are made by the magistrates and clergy, as sources of great demoralization to the lower orders, from the bad company they usually harbour.

There are several savings banks and benefit societies scattered about Wales; but in general they are found only in and near towns. The agricultural labourers do sometimes contribute to the former, but in small numbers as compared with the other classes. Most of the witnesses state that it is quite out of the question that these labourers should be able to lay by anything out of their wages; but this is not always correct, as, besides the contributions to the savings banks, many belong to benefit societies.

EMIGRATION.

EMIGRATION from Wales has been so trifling, that the subject would be hardly worth mentioning, were it not to state that the infrequency of the occurrence arises from the absence of redundancy in the population. To inquiries on this subject, in addition to the general expression of opinion that no redundancy existed, the usual answers were, "that none need want work who will take it;" "No one of a good character looks long for employment;" "We have no able-bodied, industrious men out of work." The few cases of emigration that have occurred have generally been of small farmers and mechanics, at their own expense. Some have gone from inducements held out by friends already settled abroad, and others to escape heavy taxation and the poor-rates. In a few instances parishes have sent off a family of paupers. A case of this description occurred last year in Dolgelly, whence a man, his wife and nine children (one only above 14) were sent to America, at an expense of 48*l.* This family received a weekly allowance of 2*s.*, and 1*l.* a year towards house-rent; the 48*l.* would have supported them nearly eight years at this rate; but the quantity of pauperism that the parish escaped by the deportation cannot well be calculated. There is rarely any return when the parties actually quit the country; but in some instances, where the parochial authorities have been so incautious as to trust individuals professing a wish to emigrate, with the necessary means, they have seldom reached the port of embarkation.

No objection was in general expressed to allowing parishes to raise, under some restriction, money for the purposes of emigration. The whole subject, however, has excited but little interest in this part of the kingdom, and no details were entered into, nor plans suggested.

RURAL POLICE.

THE rural police of North Wales is quite inefficient as a protection for life and property. The number of constables employed is small, usually not more than one for each township, however populous, and sometimes only two for an extensive parish. They frequently are old men, rather needing protection themselves than capable of affording it to others. Whatever is said on the absurdity of expecting unpaid overseers to be effective, applies with equal force to constables, whose duties are not only disagreeable, but may sometimes prove dangerous. In one or two instances, where these officers were paid, as in St. Asaph, much advantage was experienced from the absence of vagrants and disorderly persons.

No disturbances nor fires have occurred in this part of the kingdom; and as the people, in the rural districts, are very peaceably and well-disposed, rarely committing acts of violence or offences of any magnitude, the defects of the present police system are seldom practically brought into view.

VAGRANCY.

As Holyhead is the British port nearest to Ireland, it might be supposed that the Welsh counties, through which the line of road leading to that place runs, and especially the county of Anglesea, would be at a very heavy expense for passing returning Irish; but this is not so, and Anglesea is the only county where the expense is worth mentioning. I examined the accounts which had been sent into the treasurer of this county, from the year 1826 to 1831, both inclusive, and found that the expenditure under this head, during the

Expense in Angle-
sea for six years.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.Number of Irish
passed from Holy-
head in three years,
to 1831.Frauds practised by
Irish vagrants.Number of Irish
vagrants less than
formerly.Expense of other
classes of vagrants.Vagrancy
increasing.Vagrants chiefly
Irish and English.Vagrants seldom
relieved by
parishes.
Passes.

Evils of vagrancy.

Causes of
vagrancy.

the six years, was 257 *l.* 18 *s.*, or on an average 43 *l.* a year. The expense would have been more considerable, had not the Rev. Mr. Jones, of Treiorwerth, and Mr. Jones, of Llynnon, the two magistrates who grant most of the passes, transacted this business without the intervention of a clerk or constable. During the three years, ending December 1831, 636 Irish had been passed over from Holyhead to Ireland, at a cost to the county of 177 *l.* 10 *s.*, or on an average for each of rather more than 5 *s.* 6 *d.* As the only conveyances are the Government steam-packets, the magistrates, it is supposed, have no power, under the Vagrant Act, to fix the charge for which the vagrant must be taken, as in the case of merchant vessels: but I believe the Government have consented to carry across those having passes at 5 *s.* each; at all events, this is the sum constantly paid.

Many are the frauds and perjuries practised by Irish labourers and vagrants, in order to save the expense of the passage back. The magistrates have of late years endeavoured to check the frauds, by causing the applicants for passes to be personally searched according to the Act; but now that this has become generally known, the vagrants, before presenting themselves to the magistrate, hide their money, and often a great part of their clothing, and then proceed to plead poverty, and take the prescribed oath that they have no funds. Several cases of this sort have by chance been occasionally detected; but a more common method, when there is a party, is to place all the money in the keeping of one, and then, with the exception of that one, the rest apply for passes, their consciences being satisfied to interpret the oath to mean, money about their persons.

The number of vagrants passed from Anglesea to Ireland, has much decreased within the last seven years. The Rev. Mr. Jones states, that about eight or nine years ago, as many as 363 applicants for passes were made to him in the space of five weeks. The decrease is attributable to the lowness of the fare in crossing from Liverpool; and also to the facts, that the land journey is in general shorter by that route, and there is little to be obtained by begging through the comparatively poor counties of Wales.

The expense incurred on account of vagrancy in general is insignificant. In Flintshire, during the ten years ending December 1831, it was 226 *l.*, or on an average, 22 *l.* 13 *s.* a year, and the annual decrease was gradual; the sum spent in 1821 being 98 *l.*, and in 1831, 5 *l.* 14 *s.* In Merionethshire the expense during the same period of ten years was only 3 *l.* 17 *s.*, or a few shillings annually. I am unable to state what it was in the remaining counties, as the several clerks of the peace to whom I addressed letters requesting the particulars, have taken no notice of the request; but judging from the accounts of several parishes in those counties, it must be very trifling. In the township of Wrexham Regis (Denbighshire) where a greater sum is spent under this head than in any other place that I visited (except perhaps in the manufacturing town of Holywell) the amount in the year ending March 1832 was 13 *l.* In Llangollen (on the great Irish road) the assistant-overseer states it under 12 *s.* annually; in Llanfyllin, 10 *s.*; in Welsh-Pool under 2 *l.*; in the parish of Northop, not more than 1 *l.*; and in the town of Flint, 2 *l.* 12 *s.* for three years. If this is the expense in towns and populous places, it may be imagined that it is next to nothing in country parishes; and this I found to be the case. But it must not be concluded that because the parochial funds suffer so little, the amount of vagrancy is proportionably small; on the contrary, it is represented generally as a great and increasing evil, and is the subject of much complaint.

The majority of vagrants are stated to be Irish and English, some few Welch, but scarcely any Scotch. The account which they usually give of themselves is, that they are seeking employment; but in most cases this is only a pretence, and many instances were cited where work had been offered them and refused, with an avowal that that was not their object. The rector of Llanfyllin states, that for the last ten years he has never been able to get a vagrant to do a day's work, though seeking assistance on the plea of want of employment. They subsist in a great measure by asking alms, which many have acknowledged to be more profitable than labour; but this is not their only resource; they poach and pilfer; and going about the country in gangs, by their numbers and determined manner, extort from the fears of farmers' wives and others in an unprotected state, what would not otherwise be granted. They are seldom relieved by parish officers, unless in cases of sickness or accident. Passes are rarely used in Wales, the Welsh authorities seldom granting them (except in Anglesea, to cross to Ireland); and as they are said to be frequently forged, they are not often attended to. If, however, a pass is produced, and it is considered genuine, the bearer is never forwarded by a conveyance, unless incapable of walking, but he gets on to the next station on foot, accompanied in some places by a constable, having received in advance a mileage of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* for each adult, and 1 *d.* for children.

The serious evil arising from vagrancy in Wales, is the bad example and demoralization which it spreads amongst the population. The annoyance to which individuals are exposed from the importunity, insolence, and petty thefts of vagrants, is also a great inconvenience.

The causes of vagrancy were by many traced to the operation of the bastardy laws, to escape which, young men quit their homes and employment; also to a love of idleness, engendered by evil example; and sometimes to the stoppage of large works, when, of the number temporarily thrown out of employ, many resort to begging, and once finding how

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Stephen Walcott,
Esq.

Instance of
St. Asaph.

easy it is to obtain a living by that means, seldom afterwards return to labour. But much of this evil may be attributed to the inefficiency of the rural police, and the feebleness or absence of any systematic endeavours to check it. The laws on the subject are nearly dead letters, and the vagrants are aware that they can pursue their course almost with impunity. Three impostors, who chanced to be taken up in Montgomeryshire and committed, confessed to the constables conducting them to prison, that they had been living excellently on the public for three years, without having had any "misfortune," as they termed their detection and committal. Where any measures have been adopted to abate the nuisance, the result has been successful. A few years ago St. Asaph was so infested with vagrants and disorderly characters, that the principal inhabitants and neighbouring gentry, found it necessary to take up the matter; but seeing the inefficiency of the constabulary force, they obtained the appointment, as special constable, of a respectable individual, whose whole services are devoted to the duties of the office, and whom they remunerate by means of a private subscription. This officer is required to visit, morning and night, the pauper lodging-houses and haunts of vagrants, to question all strangers appearing to belong to that class, and to caution them, that if they are found in the parish after eight o'clock the ensuing day, or asking private or parochial assistance, he shall take them before the magistrate. As these regulations are strictly acted on, and as the magistrate invariably commits for a week those brought before him who cannot show good cause to the contrary, the evil has nearly disappeared. The same result is stated to have taken place in the parishes of Llangollen and Welch-Pool, where, on the occasion of the cholera alarm, a similar plan was adopted, and is still continued, from the satisfaction it has given.

Remedies
suggested.

The remedies suggested for checking vagrancy are, an alteration in the bastardy laws, a more efficient constabulary force, and a well-regulated prison discipline, in which constant and hard labour should be a prominent feature.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

IN conclusion, I may observe, that the administration and operation of the Poor Laws in North Wales have not as yet produced such alarming effects on the character of the labouring population, as they are represented to have done in many parts of England. The people, as a mass, are still industrious, honest and free from discontent. One fact, which must strike every one passing through the country, speaks in favour of the general industry. The females are constantly seen on the roads employed in knitting, as if unwilling to be idle even while walking to or from their occupations. Now, as the example and character of the female, influences, in so great a degree, the education and character of the young, her habits afford some criterion of those of the rest of the population. But, independently of inference, it was generally stated that the labourers were on the whole as good workmen as formerly, and that they very rarely refused work when offered them. But these laws are gradually undermining this state of things, and their influence on the prudence and forethought of the lower classes, is already mischievous in the extreme, causing an improvidence, and recklessness of the future, otherwise unaccountable. They encourage the desertion of families; a crime which is sometimes used as a means of revenging on the parish a supposed injury, and often, as a threat to extort relief; and they dry up the sources of good-will and affection between the nearest relations. Of several instances showing this, I select one, mentioned by the clergyman of Llandoged, in Denbighshire. A small but industrious farmer had brought up and established in life 9 or 10 children. This prevented his laying by any provision against the wants and accidents of declining years. Eventually, from sickness and unavoidable circumstances, the old man's affairs took an unfortunate turn, his rent fell in arrear, and he received notice to quit his farm, unless it was paid. In this emergency he applied to his children for assistance, entreating them to spare him the degradation of being thrown on the parish; but all refused, giving as their reason, "that it would only be saving the parish, and they did not see why they should do that." The old man and his wife became parish paupers.

Farming capital
diminishing.

The action of these laws is also severely felt on farming capital, which in nearly every parish that I visited was represented to be diminishing, not only by the farmers, but likewise by bankers; a good class of witnesses, from the means they possess of comparing the farmers' banking accounts at different periods. As a further evidence of this, it is notorious throughout Wales, that nearly all the farms, not in the occupation of the gentry, are much understocked with labour, although additional labour, it is said, could with profit be employed on them. It is true that high rents and the reduced prices of agricultural produce, are stated to be instrumental in producing this diminution of capital; none, however, doubted but that the operation of the Poor Laws was also a cause, and a very powerful one.

Expenditure on
poor in Wales for
the last 17 years.

Comparison of
rates and popula-
tion in 1821 and
1831.

The total expenditure on the poor from March 1815 to March 1832, is 2,278,764*l.*, or on an average 134,945*l.* a year; and the annual value of the real property in North Wales, according to the estimate made in April 1815, is 911,263*l.* This is doubtless much under the truth, but supposing it to be 1,368,321*l.* or one half more, nearly one tenth of the annual value of the country is absorbed yearly in the relief of the poor. The rates as compared with population, are certainly higher in 1821 than in 1831, being 8*s.* 8½*d.* in the former, and 7*s.* 11*d.* in the latter year, (*see* Supplement (A.) but the table in Supplement

ment (B.) shows that although the sum spent on the poor in 1831 is only 131*l.* more than that spent in 1820-21, yet that from the year 1822-23 to 1832, there has been a gradual yearly increase in the expenditure from 115,893*l.* to 149,617*l.*, and the ratio of increase during this period is greater than that of the population for the same period.

In fine, all that I have seen and heard in the course of my inquiries, compels me to report, that the evils of the present system are increasing in North Wales, and that neither the laws themselves, nor the general mode of administering them, afford any grounds for anticipating that these evils will be diminished, nor give the slightest security that they may not be increased to a ruinous extent.

February 1833.

Stephen Walcott.

(See Supplements (A.) and (B.) next page.)

SUPPLEMENT (A.)

COMPARATIVE ACCOUNT of the POPULATION and the SUMS spent on the Poor in *North Wales*, in each of the Years 1813, 1821 and 1831,

COUNTIES.	Population in 1811.	Expenditure on the Poor, in the Year ending March 1813.	What each Person paid towards the Relief of the Poor in 1811.	Population in 1821.	Expenditure on the Poor, in the Year ending March 1821.	What each Person paid towards the Relief of the Poor in 1821.	Population in 1831.	Expenditure on the Poor, in the Year ending March 1831.	What each Person paid towards the Relief of the Poor in 1831.	Difference of Rate per Head between the two last periods.	
										Increase.	Decrease.
Anglesea -	37,045	£. 9,278	s. d. 5 -	45,063	£. 14,245	s. d. 6 3 $\frac{3}{4}$	48,325	£. 15,988	s. d. 6 9 $\frac{3}{4}$	d. 6	s. d. -
Carnarvon -	49,336	12,493	5 -	57,958	17,370	5 11 $\frac{3}{4}$	65,753	21,204	6 7	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	-
Denbigh -	64,240	32,427	10 -	76,511	36,361	9 6	83,167	35,125	8 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	-	1 - $\frac{3}{4}$
Flint -	46,518	19,454	8 4 $\frac{1}{4}$	53,784	22,185	8 2 $\frac{1}{4}$	60,012	20,558	6 10	-	1 4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Merioneth -	30,924	12,280	7 11 $\frac{1}{4}$	34,382	15,385	8 11 $\frac{1}{4}$	35,609	14,865	8 4	-	- 7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Montgomery -	51,931	32,297	12 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	59,899	36,878	12 3 $\frac{3}{4}$	66,485	34,815	10 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	-	1 10 $\frac{1}{4}$
	279,994	118,229	8 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	327,597	142,424	8 8 $\frac{1}{4}$	359,351	142,555	7 11	-	- 9 $\frac{1}{4}$

SUPPLEMENT (B.)

SUMS EXPENDED for the MAINTENANCE and RELIEF of the Poor in *North Wales*, from 1816 to 1832.

COUNTIES.	Amount of the Estimates of the Annual Value of the Real Property, as Assessed in April 1815.	1816.	1817.	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.	1822.	1823.	1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	Total Expenditure of each County in 17 Years.
Anglesea -	£. 92,581	£. 11,261	£. 12,446	£. 14,696	£. 15,906	£. 14,836	£. 14,245	£. 13,331	£. 13,444	£. 13,304	£. 14,200	£. 14,624	£. 15,285	£. 15,684	£. 15,830	£. 16,006	£. 15,988	£. 17,641	£. 248,727
Carnarvon -	125,198	13,277	13,900	18,603	20,513	18,030	17,370	16,225	15,029	15,364	17,349	17,987	19,331	20,038	19,868	17,608	21,204	20,792	£. 302,488
Denbigh -	221,783	30,924	33,256	40,688	40,796	39,920	36,361	32,658	29,555	30,212	32,103	30,536	32,305	32,634	32,307	34,272	35,125	36,960	£. 580,612
Flint -	153,930	20,043	21,605	23,150	23,643	23,181	22,185	19,470	17,327	17,604	17,894	18,342	19,037	19,910	20,216	20,990	20,558	21,631	£. 346,786
Merioneth -	111,436	11,419	11,947	16,385	17,150	16,290	15,385	14,558	13,099	13,265	14,031	14,281	14,477	14,746	14,219	14,543	14,865	15,191	£. 245,851
Montgomery	207,286	28,804	29,694	38,735	39,660	39,235	36,878	33,272	27,419	26,364	27,733	29,554	29,997	32,006	30,993	31,742	34,815	37,399	£. 554,300
Total £.	912,214	115,728	122,848	152,257	157,668	151,492	142,424	129,514	115,873	116,113	123,310	125,324	130,432	135,018	133,433	135,161	142,555	149,614	£. 2,278,764

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REPORT from *E. C. Tufnell*, Esquire.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. C. Tufnell, Esq.

SCOTLAND.

IT is necessary to observe that the opinions and reasonings contained in the following Report, though delivered as the judgment of the writer, are mostly collected from residents in the districts which he visited; this way of putting them has been chosen, as it would have been nearly useless, and sometimes a breach of confidence, to make constant reference to the authors of them. Some of the terms sound strange to an English ear, but they have been used in preference to the English synonymes, as no other are recognised in Scotland: such as *heritors* for landlords, *mortified money* or *mortifications* for money bequeathed to the use of the poor. An *assessed* parish means a parish in which poor-rates are legally levied by the parochial authorities, as in England; a *non-assessed* parish, where there are no poor-rates whatever, where in effect the Poor Laws are dormant. The *kirk session* consists of elders, usually the most respectable persons in the parish, who fill up vacancies in their body by election, and the minister, who is, *ex officio*, president of the session. The heritors in general do not interfere in the administration of the Poor Laws, unless there is an assessment.

HADDINGTON.

Agricultural Parish; Population, 5,885.

This parish has been assessed for upwards of a century, but of late years its poor expenses have become much more burdensome than formerly. Simultaneously with the increase of the assessments the voluntary offerings at the church have decreased. This is an effect that never fails to result from advancing assessments; whenever they increase, and as they increase, the collections at the church doors, which used to be sufficient to support the poor, diminish, and sometimes cease entirely; legal, that is forced charity (if I may use the term), supplying the place of voluntary. In this parish the church collection in 1820 amounted to 62*l.*, in 1822 to 60*l.*, and in the last four years, each year ending in February, the rate of decrease will be seen in the following table:

Church Collections.				Church Collections.			
1829	-	-	£. 55	1831	-	-	£. 47
1830	-	-	51	1832	-	-	44

There are two reasons for this falling off of the gratuitous fund. One arises from the indisposition which every one naturally feels to give voluntarily, when he is compelled to give by law towards the support of those who would, without compulsion, be the objects of his bounty; the attempt to force charity extinguishes the virtue. The other reason is, jealousy of the heritors. It should be borne in mind, that in Scotland the tenant is not obliged, as in England, to pay the whole of the poor's-rate, but only one-half, while the heritor pays the other half. The heritor, however, is in general an absentee, and therefore contributes nothing in the way of voluntary charity at the church door; but as the money thus contributed goes to the support of the poor equally with the assessments, it of course *pro tanto* diminishes them, and the heritor is partly benefited by it. Hence making donations at the church door seems putting money in the rich man's pocket, and consequently becomes less general.

The reluctance of the poor to apply for parochial aid is diminishing with the advance of the assessment, pauperism is greatly on the increase, and their ancient feelings of independence and pride at being able to maintain themselves without assistance are nearly extinguished. There is at present only one person who receives as much as 10*s.* a week, and that is a pauper with four children; 4*s.* or 3*s.* is the most usual allowance, varying according to the number of children which the applicant possesses.

Mr. Brown, the well-known inventor of itinerating libraries, confirms the information given me by other of the residents respecting the decreasing reluctance of the poor to apply for relief, the decay of their old feelings of pride and independence, and the effect which the assessment has in preventing church collections.

DUNBAR.

Fishing and Agricultural Parish; Population, 4,735.

Assessments were introduced into this parish above 100 years ago, but I was only able to trace their history and effects during the last 10 years. Since the appointment of the

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present minister in 1822, endeavours have been successfully made to diminish them by pursuing the following plan :

As one of the chief evils of the old system lay in the facility with which relief was given, every new applicant's condition was now vigorously investigated, and thus the kirk session frequently found itself justified in refusing assistance, where before it would have been unhesitatingly granted. Parents who had been forsaken by their children were peremptorily told that their children were bound to support them, and that they must find them out, which they usually managed to do. It had been the practice to give assistance to women with illegitimate children, who concealed the name of the father, or said he was at sea or gone away. The minister, when he commenced his reforms, called a meeting of the heritors, explained to them the impolicy of these payments, and proposed that they should in future refuse all aid to women on these grounds. This was assented to ; the name of every person receiving an allowance on the score of bastard children was instantly erased from the books, and thus in one day the parish was disburdened of all expense from this source, which amounted to from 4*l.* to 5*l.* monthly. The church collections are very low, not exceeding 30*l.* per annum, the people thinking that whatever they give is only so much put into the heritor's pockets. Lately, however, the exhortations of the minister, coupled with the diminution of the assessment, have in some degree increased them ; but the town's-people give little or nothing, as, by a custom which would be more just were it reversed, the town has only to pay one-sixth part of the assessment, while the landward part of the parish bears the other five-sixths, consequently there is the less reason for the town-residents to give voluntarily that which, by a consequent diminution of the assessment, would go chiefly to the benefit of the country tenants and heritors.

The result of these measures has been to reduce the number of pauper families from 125 to 99, and the assessments in a much greater proportion, as 400*l.*, which is laid on at each assessment, is now sufficient for the expenses of 15 months, while in 1821 it only lasted 10 months, that is to say, the assessments have been reduced one-third, and in the course of a few years it is expected that they will cease altogether.

The minister attributes the pauperism in great measure to the assessments, and thinks that the knowledge that they have a legal claim to relief removes all reluctance among the poor to come on the parish, and that this reluctance is diminishing.

The diminution of pauperism in this parish is the more remarkable, as it is in the face of a circumstance that had a strong tendency to increase it, namely, the removal of a large cotton factory which was carried on here, and the decaying state of its general trade. Had it not been for these causes the diminution would have been much greater.

BERWICK-ON-TWEED.

Population, 8,920.

Though this town is English, and the Poor Laws administered entirely on the English system, I thought it might be useful to visit it, as, having just inspected several Scotch parishes, an English one might present points of contrast not so obvious under other circumstances.

The Commission have received a full account of the poor management here in the answers to their printed circulars, therefore I shall only make one observation for the sake of comparison. If we take the assessment in this town for 1831, and also its number of poor, and then if we calculate what would have been its pauperism and assessment, proportionally to its population, were it in the same condition as the neighbouring parish of Dunbar, we find that its paupers are nearly two-and-a-half times as numerous, and its assessments more than six times as large.

It should be observed that these parishes are favourably circumstanced for comparison, the occupations being in both fishing and agricultural, with the trades usually attendant on such communities, and in both education is universal. Berwick appears too, like most other places on the English border, to be managed on the best English system ; the practice of paying wages out of the poor-rates, and other abuses of the Poor Laws, so common in the southern counties, being here unknown.

HULTON, EDNAM, NEATHORN, STITCHELL AND HUME, GORDON, KELSO, LAUDER, SELKIRK.

I have visited and made inquiries respecting their pauperism in each of the above eight parishes, all of which are either close on the Tweed, or in its immediate neighbourhood. In all of them except Ednam and Neathorn, which are two very small retired parishes, I was told that the reluctance to apply for parochial assistance has much diminished, and that the feelings of shame at receiving relief, which used to be prevalent, were rapidly on the wane. The minister of Hulton writes, in answer to one of my queries : " I consider the introduction of assessments as the primary cause of the diminished reluctance of the poor to apply for parochial charity ; and there is no doubt, in my opinion, that dependence on them is increasing, and bids fair to abolish altogether their former disinclination to ask for parish relief. They now claim it as a right ; and that delicacy, which shrunk from the thought of receiving parochial assistance, has almost entirely vanished." In none of these parishes, however, have assessments much increased ; they have in general remained stationary for the

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the last ten years, or diminished. On inquiry how this fact was reconcileable with the increased desire of the poor to come on the parish, I was assured that it was owing to the greater vigilance and care with which the Poor Laws are now administered, every new applicant's case being closely sifted; in short, the heritors are now aware of the danger of carelessly giving relief, and exert themselves to keep down the expenses for the poor.

The plan is now very generally adopted of giving, as much as possible, interim supplies, which consist of small sums bestowed on those who are involved in any casual distress, being just sufficient to relieve them from their present difficulties, without placing them permanently on the poor's-roll. A very intelligent clergyman assures me, that one of the great secrets in diminishing the expenditure for the poor consists in keeping the applicants on this interim supply as long as possible, paying them at irregular intervals, as it prevents them looking to the poor's-rate as a source of permanent support; since, when they once get on the regular list, and have begun to receive a periodical allowance, they seldom get off, the habits of industry and self-reliance becoming quickly deadened.

In many parishes it is the practice to keep the funds raised by assessment separate from those raised in the church, and to deliver the former to the heritors for distribution, the latter to the kirk session; the first being *forced charity*, the other voluntary. There is frequently a marked difference in the way in which relief is received from these two sources. From the legal fund it is taken as a matter of right, and without thanks; from the voluntary it is received with gratitude. The kirk session, from the way in which that body is constituted, being composed of persons frequently mixing in friendly intercourse with the poor, is in general far better adapted to discharge the office of distributors than the heritors; it is consequently better able to discriminate the proper objects for relief, and frequently makes a sort of favour of granting it. With the heritors there is no favour, as the fund they distribute only exists by compulsion, and they give as little as they can. Thus the voluntary fund seems to discharge the true office of charity, being neither given grudgingly, or received thanklessly, while, with the assessment, the exact contrary holds true. Another great advantage results from keeping these two funds separate, as, when they are put together, people suppose that their voluntary offerings are only so much bestowed on the heritors, and consequently give little or nothing. In a large parish in this district the collections had fallen off almost to nothing, owing to the mixing of the two funds. It is true, that the real effect of the collections must be nearly the same in relieving the heritors, whether they are united with the assessments or not; but it is easy to understand why the people should be more willing to give, when they see their offerings separately bestowed on objects the most worthy of charity by a minister and elders, who are infinitely better acquainted with the real wants of the poor than the heritors can be, which latter are generally absentees, and represented by agents, caring for nothing but the immediate benefit of their masters' pockets. The heritors have a legal right to take half the collections into their own hands; this, however, they seldom exercise, as they no sooner get them than, from the cause above mentioned, they frequently vanish to nothing. As another instance of this, it was determined some time ago, by a new arrangement in the parish of Wilton, that the two funds should be put together, and the heritors have the entire dispensing of them; the consequence was, that the collections ceased altogether. Upon this they were restored to the kirk session, when the poor-plate again filled.

This voluntary fund, when thus kept separate, is usually dealt out in interim supplies to persons in casual distress, who are in general only put on the assessment fund when they become permanent paupers. I have stated above the advantage of giving interim supplies, and also the thankfulness with which aid is received from the voluntary charity fund; hence this fund has frequently the property of diminishing pauperism as much as the legal fund increases it: first, because the interim supplies often prevent the necessity of permanent ones; and, secondly, because relief, being in this case received with gratitude, is husbanded with greater care than what is taken as a right, and as the pauper's legal possession. To exemplify this, I may relate what occurred at Melrose, in which the former schoolmaster, my informant, once united the offices of session's clerk and heritor's clerk; that is, distributor of both the legal charity and the voluntary charity. It frequently happened that he had something remaining of the assessment after the demands on it were satisfied, which surplus the heritors sometimes desired him to put into the poor-plate, so that it might be distributed with the church collections as voluntary charity; when it was remarked that 10*l.* given in this way saved the heritors 20*l.* in assessment.

It is sometimes the practice, when a poor person comes on the assessment fund, to take an inventory of his goods, and sell them after his death, by way of reimbursing the heritors. This frequently has a salutary effect, as instances occur of poor persons returning what they had received, when they discovered that they had been paid from the assessment, saying, "I would sooner want it than have my goods looked over, and seized when I die." Persons, however, who are on the regular poor-list, infinitely prefer the assessment fund, as they can demand payment from it as a right.

The practice respecting giving relief to women, on the score of illegitimate children, varies. In many of the small country parishes cases of bastardy never occur. On my asking, at Ednam, whether, if an able-bodied woman were to ask for assistance on account of having a bastard to support, she would get anything, I was told that she would be peremptorily refused.

At Gordon it used to be the custom to give allowances to women in this condition; but sometime ago the heritors determined to give nothing in future on this account, and their determination has been attended with the usual good effects. The father, when he can be

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discovered, which is not often, is made to support his illegitimate child; but I could not learn any instance of his being made to pay according to his rank in life; there is consequently no temptation to perjury.

LEGERWOOD.

Agricultural Parish: Population, 565.

In this parish very satisfactory efforts have been made to reduce the poor expenditure. By the excellent management of the minister the assessments have been gradually diminishing, and, as a necessary consequence, the church collections simultaneously increasing. One of the improvements he has introduced (and in so small a parish, where the expenses cannot be great, it is a very important one), consists in paying all the parish officers, such as precentor, beadle, &c., not out of the voluntary fund, as is the usual practice, but out of the assessment, and devoting the collections wholly to the support of the poor, who, being thus mostly paid from this source, receive aid as a charity and not as a right; while assessments cease to inflict a moral injury on the community, when they are employed in discharging the salaries of parish officers, as these are payments made for services performed.

For the last four years the assessments have been the following:

									£.	s.	d.
1828	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	11	8
1829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	15	2
1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	2	2
1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	2	2

From this table it will be seen what degree of success has attended the minister's efforts, as the assessment was more than half as large again four years ago as now. The clergyman had addressed a circular to the heritors, explaining to them the evil effects of assessments, and requesting them to send yearly donations instead; for, as he truly stated to them, it was not so much on the amount that they gave as the way in which relief was given, that the bad or good effects on the receivers of it depended: and even if they gave the same sum willingly (which would never be required of them), that was forced from them by law, it was highly desirable, for the sake of the poor, that the former plan should be adopted in preference to the latter.

The minister concurs in the general opinion, that the reluctance to apply to the poor's fund is in most places diminishing.

The highest allowance paid to an individual is 5*l.* 4*s.* per annum.

HAWICK.

Manufacturing Town; Population 4,970.

It was here remarked to me by several persons, that the ancient feelings of independence and reluctance to apply for parochial charity have much diminished of late years; but that the assessments have not been proportionally augmented, owing to the cause I have given above, increased rigour on the part of the heritors in examining the claims of applicants. Mr Elliott, a gentleman residing here, who has paid much attention to the subject of pauperism, and is extensively and practically acquainted with the working of the system, assured me that this greater attention to the administration of the Poor Laws is chiefly attributable to an essay of Dr. Chalmers, published in the 58th number of the Edinburgh Review, the powerful reasoning of which, supported as it was by numerous facts, made the heritors throughout the assessed parts of Scotland sensible of the danger of giving indiscriminate relief. The parish of Hawick is in a considerably worse state as to its pauperism than the neighbouring ones; and this Mr. Elliott believed to be owing primarily to the inconsiderate benevolence of a former incumbent, who left a sum of money to be distributed yearly among the poor. The desire to draw from this fund caused many poor persons in the neighbourhood to flock into this parish, and in conformity with an observation that was frequently made to me, it had the effect of raising much greater expectations than it could answer, and considerably increasing the number of poor. Mr. Elliott was of opinion that it would not be possible to go back to the old system of supporting the poor on the church collections, as they could never be made to equal their ancient amount; first, on account of the general non-residence of heritors; secondly, by reason of the number of dissenting chapels. Both these objections appear to me to admit of an answer; for though the heritors do not reside, the farmers do, and they are at least as rich as the heritors were, when it was the custom to live in the country; they only do not give voluntarily, because they are compelled to give legally, a reason which I have heard from the mouths of many of them; besides the large amount of spontaneous offerings wherever assessments do not exist, and their instantaneous advance whenever assessments are removed, seems to me to offer irrefragable proof that the real cause of the scanty flowings of willing charity is to be traced to the operation of the law, in forcing support for the poor. As for the dissenters, they would doubtless allow the money collected in their churches to go to the support of the general poor, if their ministers were allowed a seat in the kirk session; even without this, instances sometimes occur, as in Dumfries, of the

the dissenters permitting collections to be made in their chapels for the poor of the parish. Or they might be compelled by law to support their own poor, which in some places is actually done by them. Dr. Burns, the minister of Paisley, obtained an account 12 years ago of the sums disbursed in this way by the principal dissenting congregations of that town, when they were found to amount to 500 *l.* a year.

The highest allowance given to an individual pauper in Hawick is 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, and 1*s.* 4*d.* for each child; but if it is illegitimate, only 8*d.*

The assessment has been the following for the years,

								£.
1824	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	680
1826	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	659
1828	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	704
1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	788

Church collections, including seat rents, mortcloth money, marriage fees, and a small sum of mortified money, averages between 40 *l.* and 50 *l.* per annum. They are kept separate from the assessment, and have remained nearly stationary for several years past; were it not for the seat rents they would have decreased.

JEDBURGH.

Mostly a Manufacturing Town; Population 5,647.

The assessments for this parish are on the increase; for the last four years they have been as follows:

								£.
1828	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	765
1829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	733
1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	862
1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	907

During this time the collections (the exact amount of which, from the way the books were kept, I could not readily obtain) have been progressively diminishing.

The highest allowance given to an individual is 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. Several persons declared to me, that they did not put into the poor's plate, owing to the high assessment they had to pay. The schoolmaster made the observation, which I had so often heard before, that assistance from the voluntary fund was received with much greater gratitude than from the legal.

DUMFRIES.

A few unimportant Manufactures carried on here: Population 11,606.

The poor of this town have been hitherto entirely maintained from voluntary funds; but owing to a late increase of expenditure, a meeting was about to be convened, when I visited it, to consider the propriety of assessing. Nearly every heritor in the place is aware of the inexpediency of this step, and a voluntary contribution among them has been tried; but there exists a jealousy among the heritors regarding the amount which they respectively give, some accusing others of not giving enough, or according to their fortune; and it is this jealousy, which it is expected will be here, as it has often been elsewhere, the cause of the introduction of assessments.

It would seem that the best way of benefiting this part of Scotland, would be to enact, that no parish hitherto unassessed should have the power of assessing itself for the future; as, from all that I can learn, the history of this parish has been the history of many others, and is likely to be the history of many more in this part of Scotland. The heritors are in general very willing to give voluntarily to the poor as much as may be required; they are fully sensible that with an assessment they will have to pay much more than without one, and that its inevitable tendency is to augment the poor and make a yearly increasing inroad on their rentals. But the above-mentioned jealousy of each other intervenes, and they introduce assessments, with the view of drawing greater contributions from their more parsimonious brethren. Such has been the case in Annan, and in many other places; such is on the point of being the case in Dumfries, and such it is to be apprehended will be the case in every unassessed district in Scotland.

In few parishes has voluntary charity been carried to so great an extent as in Dumfries; in fact it is the opinion of one of the ministers, that to its large amount great part of the pauperism is to be attributed. The collections for the years 1829, 1830, 1831, were respectively 193 *l.*, 168 *l.*, 209 *l.*; and last year the whole sum raised for the poor, including collections, extra donations, and 600 *l.* obtained by voluntary assessment, amounted to no less than 1,218 *l.* A short time back a supper, bed and breakfast were given to every mendicant who passed through the town, but the applications that this gave rise to were so numerous that the plan was given up. The prospect of this allowance seemed to draw beggars from all parts of the kingdom. The highest allowance given to an individual is 8 *s.* a month, and 1 *s.* 6 *d.* for each child; but 4 *s.* a month is the most usual payment. Last year, when the poor's funds were

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not sufficient for the demands on them, application was made to the dissenting ministers to allow a collection for the poor to be made in their churches, as many members of their congregations were in the receipt of parish relief; this was assented to; and in all the dissenting churches, except Catholic and Episcopalian, considerable sums were raised. At least two-thirds of the poor are Irish.

ANNAN.

Agricultural Parish: Population 5,033.

This parish has pursued the course on which Dumfries appears about to be entering; and if the latter would take warning from the results that are now made manifest in Annan, it might possibly hesitate in its progress.

In the year 1817, owing to the pressure of the times, the poor had considerably increased; when, in a meeting of the heritors, called to consider what should be done, many of them, being aware of the injurious effect of assessments, proposed a voluntary contribution. By far the majority of the meeting concurred in this plan; but some of the smaller heritors refused to give anything, and this disagreement was the means of introducing the assessment*. Thus begun, it gradually increased from 2*d.* in the pound at the commencement to 3*d.* in 1827, and for the last four years it has been 7*d.* There has been much greater poverty since the introduction of assessments than before; the reluctance of the people to apply for aid is yearly and rapidly diminishing, and feelings of charity, even between relations, nearly annihilated. As one instance of this, a man, possessed of considerable property, the proprietor of one of the largest houses in the town, has at this moment one of his aunts receiving 3*s.* a week from the parish, while another was buried last year at the public expense, he refusing to pay for her coffin; and this is an example of what frequently occurs. Several of the neighbouring parishes not being assessed, the poor are continually coming from them to Annan, where, if they get on the poor's roll, they receive much more than in their own parishes; for instance, half as much again as in the neighbouring unassessed parish of Dornock. As an example of the way in which this system increases pauperism, I may mention the following case: A short time ago an old woman applied for relief to the clerk, who discovering that she belonged to Dornock, told her to apply there. She replied, that it was not worth while, as she knew she would get so little. However, as the clerk would give her nothing, she was put upon her means, soon found employment, and is now living decently, entirely supported by her own labour in a much better condition than she would have been had she received the highest allowance given here, which is 4*s.* a week.

A subscription of 120*l.* was made this year on account of the cholera, but in many cases it appears to have produced harm, as the spectacle of so many persons receiving assistance weakened the feelings of independence, and removed the discredit that used to attach to a maintenance by public charity.

The sessions clerk mentioned an instance of a woman applying to him for something from this cholera fund, and whose application he refused, as she was not a proper object. He shortly afterwards met her gaily dressed in the street, and asked her whether she was not ashamed to apply to a charitable fund; she answered that she thought she might as well try to get a few coals and blankets, when she saw so many other persons getting them. This is the way in which injudicious charity seems frequently to sap the foundations of industry and independence. When any person in poverty and distress receives in charity more than his real wants require, or, being able to support himself, draws the whole or any part of his subsistence from a charitable fund, jealousy at such good fortune is excited in the breast of his neighbour, whose sole dependence is on his own unassisted exertions, and he thinks it hard that another in his own condition of life should obtain, without labour, or with less proportionate labour, what he can only get as the strict return of continued toil.

Contrary to what might be expected, the church collections in this parish have of late considerably increased; but this I am assured is to be accounted for by the unpopularity of the former minister among his parishioners, which caused many to secede from the church. Since the appointment of the present one they have come back, and hence the poor plate has been filled.

KELTON and CASTLE DOUGLAS, GLENLUCE, STRANRAER, STONY-KIRK, PORT-PATRICK,
GIRVAN, MAYBOLE.

I have visited each of the above parishes, and obtained a complete account of the state and management of their poor. None of them are assessed, but they are all, without exception, overrun with paupers from Ireland, who form frequently three-fourths and sometimes

* There are several heritors in this parish possessing about 20*l.* a year, who by law have equal power in the distribution of the assessment with the largest proprietors. These persons are the most assiduous attenders of the heritor's meetings, and are observed to be particularly active whenever there is a question about putting their poor relations on the roll, and settling their allowances.

times a greater proportion of those who receive parish aid. This part of the population are totally destitute of independence of feeling, and never display the smallest shame at receiving relief, while with the Scotch this is by no means the case, as their ancient sentiments of pride are not quite broken down. I was told at Glenluce that there were some Scotch poor in a lower condition than some of the Irish receiving parish support, but who disdained to apply for relief. It is impossible to attribute this difference to any other cause than their superior education and religion.

In Stranraer, the minister was of opinion that assessments would shortly be introduced, owing to the increase of poor, but this increase he partly attributed to 23*l.* per annum of mortified money, to partake in which the neighbouring poor are eager to get a settlement in his parish. Of the evil effects of mortified money I have frequently heard complaints, in some particulars it appears more injurious even than assessments, as whatever is its amount, it must all be spent, whether it is wanted or not, and of this the poor are well aware. Besides, aid from this source is seldom received with feelings of thankfulness or as charity. The minister of Stranraer mentioned to me an instance of a woman boasting that she was not receiving charity, because she was paid from the mortified fund.

One of the most striking circumstances in the unassessed parishes is the large amount of the Sabbath collections; but perhaps a more curious fact is the large proportion of them that is bestowed by the poorer classes. In Glenluce a complaint was made that the rich were not liberal enough at the church doors, and the schoolmaster, in order to discover from whom the collections were derived, counted separately the copper and the silver, when it was found that two-thirds of the sums were copper and the rest silver. As its population is only 2,180, and there is a large dissenting congregation, two-thirds of 112*l.*, the amount collected last year, seems no small sum to be given by the poor. But in some places it is larger. In Stony-kirk, a retired parish situated in the extremity of Galloway, sometimes as much as 30*s.* in halfpence are collected on a single Sunday, and in many churches in this unassessed part of Scotland, the poorest person will put something into the poor plates: this I learn both by report and observation. I mention these facts, because they are remarkable illustrations of the doctrine of Dr. Chalmers, respecting the charity of those in low circumstances when not interfered with by enactments of law.

I have drawn up the following tables by way of making a comparison between some assessed and unassessed parishes in the south of Scotland. There are eight parishes in each table: the unassessed ones happened to be the only places of which I obtained the accurate number of poor, therefore there can be no unfairness in selecting them. The assessed ones are taken indiscriminately from various parts of Scotland, purposely distant from each other, in order to make the result nearer the general average. There are two Glasgow parishes, one in each table: I was of course restricted to St. John's in the table of unassessed places, and as it is the poorest parish in the city, not to make an unfair match I have put Blackfriars, the next poorest parish, in the other table.

PARISHES assessed for the Poor.

	Population.	Number of regular Paupers.	Church Collections.	Other Poor's Funds.	
			£.	£.	
Haddington -	5,883	153	44	850	* This is only an approximation to the truth, as it is impossible to tell how much hospital support is received by each parish in Glasgow. This sum has been obtained by supposing that its hospital poor equal in proportion its sessional poor, which are one sixth of the sessional poor of Glasgow.
Ednam -	637	15	7	102	
Gordon -	882	27	14	135	
Annan -	5,033	102	100	475	
Hawick -	4,970	104	30	793	
Blackfriars -	7,569	219	61	1,269*	
Selkirk -	2,833	42	47	311	
Hutton -	1,099	32	14	204	
Total -	28,906	494	317	4,139	

Or one pauper to every 58 $\frac{19}{100}$ persons.

Each person gives 2 $\frac{7}{12}$ *d.* in voluntary donation.

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PARISHES not Assessed for the Poor.

	Population.	Number of Regular Paupers.	Church Collections.	Other Poor's Funds.
			£.	£.
Stony-kirk - -	2,966	36	53	48
Girvan - -	6,430	60	80	98
Maybole - -	6,287	40	93	—
Dirleton - -	1,384	23	99	49
St. John's - -	11,746	67	398	—
Total - -	28,813	226	723	195
Kelton - -	2,877	30	64	57
Glenluce - -	2,180	27	112	9
Stranraer - -	3,329	30	50	23
Total - -	37,119	313	949	274

* This break in the table is made simply because the total population of these five parishes equals, within a minute fraction, the population of the eight assessed ones; consequently the proportion of paupers, &c. to the population in the two classes of parishes may be seen at once at this point, without further calculation.

Or one pauper for
every 118 $\frac{55}{100}$ persons.

Each person gives 6 $\frac{1}{12}$ d. in
voluntary donation.

It will be seen that in the assessed parishes there is one pauper to every 58 persons, and in the unassessed one to every 118 persons, or more than double the other. Also that the unassessed parishes give three times as much in voluntary donation as the assessed ones.

In every part of Scotland that I have visited, there is an unanimous complaint that reluctance to apply for parochial charity is much diminished, and that their ancient feelings of pride at relying on their own resources are fast wearing away. I have constantly made inquiries for an explanation of this fact, but the answers I receive are very various. It is said to be owing to the influx of the Irish, to the example of English parishes, to the increased difficulty of obtaining subsistence, to a general decay of morality. The Reverend Mr. M'Clellan, the minister of Kelton, who appears to have paid much attention to the subject, was of opinion that though the above causes doubtless had some influence, the evil is chiefly attributable to their having become better acquainted with their legal rights to relief, and hence that all feelings of shame at receiving it are suppressed in the idea that they are only taking what is properly their own. Dr. Chalmers inclines to this explanation; it is also concurred in by those clergymen and other residents who appeared to have most considered the point; I therefore give it as the true one. The Commission will perceive that on such a topic the opinion of a passer-by would be worth nothing.

Possibly, however, this decay of independence may be partly attributable to indiscreet charity, the evil effects of which have lately been made very conspicuous in the subscriptions that were collected from fear of the cholera. An instance of this at Annan I gave in a former report. At Kelton also a soup-kitchen was established last winter on account of the cholera, and coals and blankets were liberally given away. The sight of so many people receiving those articles induced several persons in very good circumstances, and who otherwise would not have thought of applying, to demand something from this cholera fund; and here, as elsewhere, increase of charity had the effect of increasing supplicants for charity, and destroying the sentiments of pride in the ability of the receivers to depend on their own exertions. Precisely the same effects were observed at Stranraer from a soup-kitchen established under similar circumstances. At Girvan also the evils of injudicious charity have been signally displayed. The minister, who has resided there sufficiently long to remember when the Irish began to come into the parish, says, that it was then the custom when one of them died, for the friends of the deceased to make a contribution among themselves to pay the expenses of the burial; but the kirk sessions having defrayed the funeral expenses of two or three, it was afterwards found impossible to raise any more contributions for this purpose, and the parish have ever since been at the expense of burying them. The Irish of the same place were also in the habit of paying for the instruction of their children, till some over-benevolent persons thought to assist them by sending the children to school at their own expense; and from that time the Irish have in general refused to send their children to school at all, unless the instruction is gratuitous, and in fact have in a great measure become indifferent to it.

I was frequently assured, in the assessed districts, that I should find the unassessed ones overrun with beggars, as, without the resource of mendicancy, it would be impossible for the poor to live in them. This, however, I found to be incorrect, as I neither saw or was accosted by a single beggar in any unassessed parish, while I have seen a few in the assessed ones. But I should observe, that I visited the country at a time when it would be hardly fair to make any deductions from observation as to its general condition in this particular, as, owing to a dread of the cholera, the most vigorous measures had been everywhere taken

to stop vagrant beggars, lest they might communicate infection. The poor, however, are authorized to beg in some parishes, but the way in which this liberty is restricted, entirely removes the common objection to allowing them to be supported in this way. They are strictly prohibited from begging out of the parish; and as they seldom if ever ask of strangers, this species of begging seems incapable of being abused, since givers and receivers being well known to each other, imposition is prevented and undue profits never obtained. It is the substitution of this private charity for every species of legal support for the poor, whether from church collections or assessments, that forms the great object of the system recommended by Dr. Chalmers.

I visited but few parishes in the Highlands, as assessments are comparatively rare among them, and little interesting information is to be obtained respecting the poor, unless it be considered an important circumstance that throughout the greater part of the north of Scotland, paupers and poor-laws are equally unknown. In Inverary, which contains 2,254 inhabitants, a Sabbath collection of 60*l.* a year, 12*l.* arising from fines, and a yearly subscription of 20*l.* from the Duke of Argyle, is all that is expended on the poor. Two paupers receive as much as 5*l.* per annum, but the general allowance to an individual is 2*l.* The poor belonging to the 14,000 inhabitants of Inverness are maintained by the yearly gratuitous offering of 400*l.*; 2*l.* is the extreme allowance given to any person in a twelvemonth. 25*l.* is yearly distributed among the poor of Aberfoyle, which reckons a population of 660 souls; and about 60*l.* in the united parish of Glenorchy and Innishail, a district numbering 1,807 inhabitants, and in which 1*l.* 10*s.* is the highest yearly allowance to an individual. In all these parishes, and generally throughout this part of Scotland, an applicant's character is always considered in admitting his claim to relief, and his allowance is diminished and sometimes wholly withdrawn, on any immorality being proved against him. It is needless to remark on the good effects of this practice, but it is obvious that it could not be pursued were not the poor in general unaware of their legal right to parish support: it mostly forms a distinctive mark between the unassessed and assessed districts; in the former, the relief to the poor being thus made to act as a premium on virtue; in the latter, this consideration entering but slightly or not at all into the views of the dispensers of the parochial funds.

I have just received a letter from the Commission, desiring me to inquire more particularly into the subject of vagrancy. Owing to the peculiarity of the Scotch law of settlement, the evils of vagrancy are very little felt. Three years industrial residence is all that is required to establish a claim on a parish, consequently by far the majority of those who apply for relief have a legal right to it, and cannot be considered as vagrants. There is much complaint in Scotland of this law, as it is the practice of the Irish to come over in great numbers, and having managed to live for three years in any parish without asking relief, they then become entitled to it, and the parish is ever after burdened with them. Many Irish, between 70 and 80 years of age, come over for the sole purpose of being supported by some Scotch parish, an object which they are certain of attaining if they can keep off the poor-roll for three years. Hence very few persons apply who have not a right to parish relief, since such an application deprives them of the power of having a right to it till three years from the time of asking are expired; therefore it is much their interest to wait till they establish a legal settlement. The whole expense incurred in Edinburgh for removing vagrant paupers does not exceed 100*l.* a year.

It is very rarely the practice, in removing paupers, to give them any means of conveyance, except in extreme cases, when they are utterly unable to walk. A shilling or two is all that is given, and a pass, stating the parish to which the holder is going; this the pauper takes to the next place in his route, where he receives a similar assistance, and so on till he arrives at the place where he has a legal settlement. He is, however, usually allowed to reside in any parish he pleases, receiving his allowance from the authorities of the place, who are reimbursed by the parish on which he has a legal claim. The rate of allowance is amicably settled between the different sessions, and there are few parishes which have not standing accounts with others, paying and receiving for paupers not residing where they have claims to support; thus the convenience of the paupers is consulted, and the expense of removals in great measure saved. This practice, however, is attended with one disadvantage, as it removes the pauper from the observation of those who pay him, he consequently escapes that scrutiny which is the only barrier against the encroachments of pauperism.

Many complaints are made in Scotland of the English law of settlement, by which it is so difficult to establish a claim to relief, that many instances occur of Scotchmen leaving their homes in their youth, and having resided 50 years or more in England, being then returned in their old age to Scotland, after all their strength has been expended out of the country; while, owing to the ease with which settlements may be obtained in Scotland, there is no reciprocity of evil between the two countries. A short time ago a poor woman was sent in a cart by the parish officers from Portsmouth to Edinburgh, where she thought her husband had a settlement; on her arrival it was found that she had none there, but one somewhere in the west of England, whither she was forthwith sent, and arrived at her destination after travelling nearly a thousand miles. In the border parishes the complaints of the English law of settlement are most frequent.

However, the Scotch law of settlement has one great advantage in its extreme simplicity, by reason of which there are very few disputes in determining the parish to which a pauper belongs, and the expense of litigation is very small, and in most parishes nothing whatever.

An opinion seems to be prevalent that the term of residence requisite to establish a claim to parish relief, might be advantageously increased.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. C. Tufnell, Esq.

In Scotland the power of removing a pauper, on suspicion that he may become chargeable, has never existed, and the present English Vagrant Act, 17 Geo. 2, c. 15, does not extend to Scotland.

It is the unanimous opinion amongst all persons with whom I have conversed on the subject, that Scotland has in great measure been saved from the evils of pauperism by a decision of Lord Pitmilley, in 1821, which laid down, that the sheriff has no right to interfere with the heritors and kirk session, either in compelling them to give relief to any one, or in fixing the amount to be given.

Previous to that year, it was becoming the practice for the poor to apply to the sheriff, as they do now in some parts of England to the magistrate, whenever they were either refused assistance, or thought that they had not got enough from the parochial authorities. The sheriff, in general, listened to their complaint, and as he could be little acquainted with the circumstances of those who applied to him, he was frequently deceived. The Reverend Mr. Duncan, the minister of Ruthwell, in his evidence before the Poor Law Committee of 1819, stated, that this power of the sheriff was one great cause of the increase of the poor-rates, and the truth of this opinion has been shown by experience, since Lord Pitmilley's decision virtually abolished the power. They were before increasing with very great rapidity, but a sudden check was thus placed to their further advance; and now the pauper can only appeal to the Court of Session, which is nearly tantamount to denying him all power of appeal whatever.

I have been requested to make inquiries, whether there appear to be any grounds for the assertion, that assessments are the universal accompaniment of wealth and prosperity, which it is said can only be preserved and increased by means of assessments, and that the non-assessed places are the least prosperous.

From all that I can see or learn, there appears to be not the smallest foundation for this opinion. Parishes assessed and unassessed are sprinkled over the country, apparently without the smallest reference to their respective wealth or fertility. The Carse of Gowrie, perhaps the richest district in Scotland, is hardly assessed at all. Strathearn, which contains every variety of soil, from the most barren mountain to the most fertile plain, is, with the exception of two or three parishes, entirely unassessed.

In the south of Scotland it does so happen, that the east, which is naturally by far the richest part, is mostly assessed, while the poorer countries in the west are in general unassessed; and from a one-eyed observation of this fact, the opinion I am discussing seems to have arisen. But the western parishes are rapidly becoming assessed, and I never heard the charge attributed by the residents to an increase in their prosperity, but to a relaxation of the independent feelings of the peasantry, or to the influx of the Irish, or to some cause that may have involved a decay of their wealth, but assuredly not an augmentation of it.

But how does it happen that there are unassessed parishes distinguished by no difference of soil, or apparent affluence, situated in the midst of places which have been assessed for near a century? Dirleton, for instance, of which I have given an account elsewhere, is situated in one of the richest counties in Scotland, being close to Haddington, which has one of the largest corn markets in this part of the kingdom.

This parish was recovered from assessment in 1823, and most certainly the land is neither stricken with barrenness, nor is the general prosperity of the place decreased; there is more private charity and less complaint of poverty among the inhabitants, and that is the whole perceptible difference.

The Commission will receive with this report an account of Dalkeith, which is situated in the midst of a rich assessed district, where the land lets from 6*l.* to 7*l.* per acre, and the poor-rate of which has been reduced by the minister this year from 10*d.* in the pound to 8*d.*, and will undoubtedly be abolished in the course of a couple of years. This consummation, when it takes place, will be as clearly traceable up to the tact and perseverance of the minister in refusing relief to undeserving objects, and stimulating the charity of his parishioners in favour of the deserving, as ever effect was traced to cause.

The most decisive refutation of this opinion seems to spring from an investigation of the effect of giving or refusing relief in each particular case. If the applicant is put upon the poor's-roll, exertion is at once relaxed, and the charity of the pauper's friends instantly chilled. If a refusal is given, perhaps like the woman at Annan, whose case I mentioned in a former part of this report, the applicant quickly finds work, and henceforth lives respectably on her own labour, or being unable to work, as in the example of the widow which I have mentioned in my report on Dalkeith, the charity of the neighbours supplies what the parish will not.

The proceeds of private benevolence are always more gratefully received, and therefore more thriftily expended than the receipts from a public fund, consequently it may easily be conceived that there will be a less destruction of wealth in an unassessed than in an assessed parish; but how the contrary can take place, how assessments can increase or preserve wealth, is difficult to be understood. St. John's parish, which is not assessed for its poor, is the least wealthy in Glasgow; its humble condition may be a reason why it should have *more* poor, and consequently higher poor-rates, than the other nine Glasgow parishes; but that it should be the reason why it has fewer poor, and no poor's-rates, is incomprehensible. By the examples of St. John's, Dirleton, Legerwood, Dalkeith, it is obvious that assessments may be readily abolished in any part of Scotland by merely making due efforts to arouse the charitable sympathies of the inhabitants, and thus bringing into action moral forces, which have as much connection with the fertility or prosperity of any parish as with

its

its longitude. I do not quite understand whether this theory attributes assessments to richness of soil or absolute wealth. It seemed to me to charge them on both conjointly, and as such I have taken it.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. C. Tufnell, Esq.

GLASGOW.

The city of Glasgow, though legally one parish, is divided, for the sake of convenience, into 10 distinct parishes, each with its separate church, minister and kirk session. The law of settlement, however, does not apply to protect one of these districts from the influx of poor out of another, as a pauper, who has a settlement in one of the 10 parishes, has a right, on removing into another, to demand immediate relief from its kirk session, in the same way as if he had always resided within its jurisdiction. It is of importance, with respect to what follows, to note this, as it has the effect of equalizing the mode of treating the poor by the several parochial authorities, since, if any parish is harsher or kinder towards the applicants for relief than its neighbours, it is quickly remonstrated with as throwing off the burden of supporting its poor on other parishes, or is itself overwhelmed with paupers.

The poor are supported from two sources, the church collections and the assessment; which latter is levied from all the inhabitants who are supposed to be worth 300 *l.* and upwards, according to their means and substance.

Every parish is divided into a certain number of parts, over each of which an elder presides, and to him any person in his district requiring relief applies: upon this the elder closely investigates the applicant's condition, ascertains whether he can do any and what work, whether he receives any pension or support from any society or charity, in short, every thing relating to his claims and resources; and if he is satisfied that there are grounds for giving relief, he reports the case to the kirk session to which he belongs, which, if they see fit, order such a sum to be given as the case may require. This sum is always extremely moderate, never exceeding 5*s.* a month; and if the pauper is unable to maintain himself with this assistance, he is handed over to the town hospital, by which institution he is henceforth supported, and his allowance from the kirk session instantly ceases, as a pauper is never permitted to be paid from these two sources at once.

The town hospital is to all intents and purposes a poor-house, and would be so termed in England: cases of fractured limbs, fevers, &c. are not taken in by it at all, but are disposed of at the infirmary and other charitable institutions.

With the exception of 450 *l.* per annum from corporate bodies, the interest of 3,511 *l.* of stock, and some other small casual sources of income, it is entirely supported by the assessment, the whole amount of which is paid over, in the first instance, to the directors of the hospital. No persons are allowed to remain within it, but such as from their age or infirmities are totally incapacitated from supporting themselves; also those lunatics and idiots who are not sent to the asylum, are kept within its walls. Besides the inmates, there are large numbers of out-door poor supported by it, who are paid partly in meal and partly in money, and who, in the year ending August 1831, amounted to 475 families and individuals.

The funds of the kirk sessions arise from offerings at their respective churches, but these are seldom sufficient for the demands made on them, though they have only to pay those whose necessities are not supposed to require above 5*s.* a month; they are consequently allowed to draw for the deficiency on the funds of the town hospital, that is, the assessment. Hence the first stage in the history of a pauper is an application through an elder to the kirk session of his parish, by whom he receives a certain amount of relief, which is raised according to his wants till it gets to 5*s.* a month; he is then, should he be unable to subsist on this, sent to the hospital, by which he is maintained perhaps as an out-door pauper on a greater allowance, till, becoming friendless or decrepid, he is taken into the house, where he is employed in picking oakum or tambouring, or such slight work as he or she is able to perform.

Such was the state of things when Dr. Chalmers began his reforms, except in one particular. The whole of the collections from all the city churches used to be paid into the hands of the general session, a body consisting of a union of all the 10 kirk sessions, and which was in the habit of distributing these collections among the several kirk sessions, according to the applications which they respectively made on behalf of their poor; if the applications from the sessions exceeded in the aggregate the amount of the collections contributed to the common fund, the overplus was paid from the assessment. Thus, whatever the collection may have been in any parish, the poor of it were neither benefited by its size, nor injured by its smallness, as whatever sum it applied for was drawn through the general session, and paid without observation, whether the sum demanded was greater or less than its collection brought into the general fund. Hence there was no stimulus in the congregation of any church to increase their offerings on any increase of their poor, since nine other parishes would equally share in the benefit of any addition collected, and, similarly, a falling off in their donations would comparatively little affect them.

Dr. Chalmers, previously to commencing his reforms in the management of the poor, took the whole of his church collections out of the general fund, so that his kirk session might have the sole disposal of them. This plan has been since pursued by all the other parishes, so that at present the collections are not united into one mass at all, but retained by the several kirk sessions in whose parishes they have been gathered, and given out by them to their poor in the way before mentioned.

Appendix (A.)
 Reports.
 E. C. Tufnell, Esq.

When however this change was made in St. John's parish it drew nothing from the assessment directly, as its sessional poor, that is its poor who did not receive above 5s. a month, only cost 225*l.* annually, while its collections amounted to 400*l.*, consequently, by the new arrangement, 175*l.* was withdrawn from the general support of the poor of the city. In return for this advantage, Dr. Chalmers promised to send no more poor to the hospital, but to provide for all his parochial poor within his own parish, supporting them solely by his church collections. Thus the St. John's poor that were already in the hospital would gradually die away, and not being replenished, so far as this parish was concerned, the assessment would be entirely useless, and laid on for no purpose whatever, except to support the poor of the other nine parishes.

This system has been attended with the most triumphant success for 13 years; it is now in perfect operation, and not a doubt is expressed by its managers of its continuing to remain so. The poor which St. John's had in the hospital have diminished by deaths to four, and even the expense of maintaining these is paid for by the parish out of its collections, consequently it has to undergo the hardship of being assessed for the support of the poor, without receiving a farthing's benefit from the money so raised, as not a single pauper belonging to it is maintained by the assessment.

The chief virtue of the new system seems to consist in the closer investigation which each new case of pauperism receives, by which means the parish is prevented from being imposed on; and as it is well known by the poor that this severe scrutiny is never omitted, attempts at imposition are less frequently practised.* The laxity of the old management and utility of this investigation may be exemplified by what occurred when it was first put in practice. As all the St. John's sessional poor were closely examined, it was thought unfair not to bring their out-door hospital poor, which the old system had left, to the same scrutiny; when it was discovered that many persons were receiving relief who had no claim to it, and who were consequently instantly struck off the roll; one man was found in the receipt of a weekly allowance who had eight workmen under him. It may safely be averred, that under the present management such an instance could not possibly occur. It is right, however, to mention, that in the other Glasgow parishes a much closer attention is bestowed on each case of pauperism than formerly.

In spite, however, of this success, the lovers of the old system still oppose the new as keenly as ever; and there seems to be as much difference of opinion in Glasgow at present respecting its merits as when it was first established. Amidst these conflicting statements it would be presumptuous in a stranger to give an opinion except so far as it is drawn from facts, and these it seems are all in favour of it. In proof of this, I must request the attention of the Commission to the annexed table. The three first columns are extracted from Dr. Cleland's work on the Statistics of Glasgow and Lanarkshire; the three last are from documents prepared at my request by the parochial officers of the respective parishes. The date to which these last columns have been made up is the year ending the last day of August 1832:

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Names of Parishes in the City of Glasgow.	Population in 1831.	Number of Servants.	Number of Irish.	Money drawn from the Assessments.	Church Collections.	Number of Sessional Poor.
				£.	£.	
St. George's - -	15,242	1,109	1,212	125	294	123
St. John's - - -	11,746	203	2,311	none	482	72
St. Mungo's - - -	10,295	311	865	330	56	169
Outer High - - -	9,137	389	781	287	138	171
St. James's - - -	8,217	453	1,835	85	180	121
St. Enoch's - - -	7,921	567	1,057	none	351	130
Blackfriar's - - -	7,569	179	1,017	424	61	219
St. Mary's - - -	7,529	299	2,177	324	112	185
St. David's - - -	6,268	630	176	none	158	79
St. Andrew's - - -	5,923	302	1,123	146	89	80

COMPARATIVE

* *Note by Dr. Chalmers.*—This close investigation is all the more necessary, that St. John's is surrounded by hostile observers, ever ready to charge its administration with severity to the poor, a charge which can only be met by an exhibition of the actual circumstances of any applicant who may complain of the award of the deacons regarding him. Were St. John's, or any other parish in its condition, not thus beset with the example and the hostility of parishes under a rival system of management, such laborious investigation would not be called for, in which case the chief virtue of the system would be in the extreme moderation of its allowances, and the reflex influence of this on the habits and expectations of the people. Even as it is, their applications for relief are so few as to make the labour of the deacons exceedingly light indeed. For this see my evidence on Irish pauperism before the Parliamentary Committee in 1830, and a pamphlet entitled, "Eight Years' Experience of the Pauperism in Glasgow."

COMPARATIVE VIEW of the Income and Expenditure of the Hospital, for the Years ending 31st August 1828, 1829, 1830 and 1831, and the Balance at each of these Periods.

	1828.			1829.			1830.			1831.		
RECEIPTS :	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Balance in favour of the hos- pital, 1828, 1829, 1830 and 1831 - - - - -	1,102	15	7 ½	1,664	4	4 ½	396	14	4 ½	608	-	1
Nett proceeds of assessment -	5,739	13	10	4,686	19	6	6,124	-	3	5,845	18	1
Contributions from public bodies	450	-	-	450	-	-	450	-	-	450	-	-
Receipts of the hospital -	579	12	7	718	17	-	600	11	11 ½	565	11	7
Balance against the hospital, 31st August 1831 - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	145	5	6
£.	7,872	2	- ½	7,520	-	10 ½	7,571	6	7	7,614	15	3
DISBURSEMENTS :												
Expenditure within the house	2,789	6	1	2,816	5	10	2,707	8	8	2,819	6	3
Ditto - out-door - - -	3,222	7	-	3,931	12	5	4,173	5	10	4,644	17	-
Miscellaneous - - - - -	196	4	7	375	8	3	82	12	-	150	12	-
Balance in favour of the hos- pital, 31st August 1828, 1829 and 1830 - - -	1,664	4	4 ½	396	14	4 ½	608	-	1	-	-	-
£.	7,872	2	- ½	7,520	-	10 ½	7,571	6	7	7,614	15	3

The first column contains the parishes, placed in the order of their population, the second and third are given as a test of their respective wealth and likelihood of poverty, the former of which is not inaccurately shown by the number of servants in each parish, and the latter by the number of Irish, which here, as everywhere else in this part of Scotland, form the bulk of the poorer classes. The fourth column gives the sums which each parish draws from the assessment, to make up the deficiency left by its church collection in maintaining its sessional poor.

It will be perceived that St. John's is the second in population, but that it contains fewer servants than any other parish except Blackfriars, which falls far below it in point of numbers. Hence it is by much the *poorest* parish in Glasgow.

Again, the Irish are in greater numbers here than in any other parish. Hence it has its full share of the elements of pauperism.

Proceeding to the fourth and fifth column, we find that it takes nothing from the assessment, and collects more than any other parish.

By the last column we come to the extraordinary fact, that, in spite of its population, its poverty and its Irish, it actually has *fewer paupers* than any other parish in Glasgow ; and the only one that approaches it in this respect is St. David's, which contains little more than half the population of St. John's.

This, however, is not all ; every other parish has a considerable portion of its paupers maintained by the hospital ; St. John's has only four within the walls of this institution, and these it pays for out of its collections. It is impossible to tell from the hospital accounts to what parishes those persons which it supports belong. Last year this institution maintained under its roof 420 persons, and of out-door poor 475 families and individuals ; these 895 recipients of charity are referable to all the parishes except St. John's, and should be distributed according to their parishes along the sixth column of the Table, assigning only four to St. John's, in order to show the true amount of the pauperism of each parish.

The hospital entails on the city a considerable annual expense, which amounted last year to 7,614*l.*, raised chiefly by assessment. This assessment is levied on St. John's in the same way as on the other parishes, and it is naturally felt as a great hardship by its inhabitants, that they should be compelled to support an hospital from which they receive no benefit, that though their parish is the poorest in the city, they should be obliged to maintain not only their own paupers, but also to contribute to the support of those belonging to other and far richer parishes. The feeling of injustice on this score prevents, I was told, some of the parishioners from giving as much in voluntary donations, as they otherwise would, and large as the church collections are, were it not for this circumstance, they would be larger.

When this system was begun, it was declared by its opponents that it could not last, but it has lasted for 13 years : that it could only exist under Dr. Chalmers, but it has existed equally well under his two successors, Dr. Macfarlan and Dr. Brown : that in no other church so large offerings could be collected, as an undue proportion of rich attended St. John's church. This, I am assured by the residents is incorrect, and that the congregation

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. C. Tufnell, Esq.

is not richer than an average one. During Dr. Chalmers's incumbency, the large amount of the collections was doubtless partly owing to his popularity, as they have since declined on the average; but by an inspection of the fifth column of the Table, it will be seen that they at present far exceed what is given in any other parish. This, I have little doubt, is owing to the knowledge, which the church-goers have, that the sole dependence of the poor is on the collections. This is the case so uniformly in every parish I have visited, that it might be known, whether the poor of any place in Scotland were supported by assessment, simply by an inspection of the amount of offerings at the church door.

It has been said, that since the parishes of Glasgow are not protected against each other's poor by the law of settlement, the small number of the St. John's paupers is owing to their poor being mostly driven out of the parish by the harsh treatment they receive. Before this system was commenced, so confident was the founder of it that the reverse would take place, that the poor would prefer instead of avoiding his parish on account of the different mode of treating them, that he actually stipulated, in a letter to one of the magistrates published at the time, that the law of settlement should take effect between his parish and the other parishes; in other words, that he should be protected from the influx of paupers from other parishes, which in return were to be similarly protected against his own. And so correct were his anticipations (the stipulation not having been agreed to), that in the first three years of the existence of the reformed plan, twice as many paupers came in as went out; and one of the managers assures me, that a constant preference seems given by the poor to St. John's above other parishes, on account of the different way of treating them; at any rate there is no disinclination to dwell in it.

Four parishes have endeavoured to imitate the St. John's system of parochial management; but three of them, after a short trial, have given it up; and in the fourth, St. David's, it is in a tottering condition, as the parish has just received 50*l.* from the assessment to enable it to go on for the present year, in the hope that with this assistance it may be able to get over its present difficulties, and finally persevere in the system. It is impossible to get at the truth respecting the causes of these failures; those who have tried this system out of St. John's parish, declare them to be owing to its impracticability; the St. John's managers say that they are attributable to their imitators not having pursued it with sufficient vigour, that there are many difficulties to be encountered at first, which have scared those who have attempted to follow them, but that these being conquered, the course is smooth and easy*.

The essence of the St. John's management consists in the superior system of inspection which it establishes; this is brought about by causing the applicants for aid to address themselves, in the first instance, to persons of station and character, whose sole parochial duty consists in examining into their condition, and who are always ready personally to pay a kind attention to their complaints.

This personal attention of the rich to the poor seems to be one of the most efficient modes of preventing pauperism. It is a subject of perpetual complaint that the poor do not receive the charities of the rich with gratitude†. The reason of this appears to be, that the donation of a few shillings from a rich man to a poor one is no subtraction from the giver's comforts, and consequently is no proof of his interest in the other's welfare: it seems natural and reasonable that there should be some proportion preserved between the gratitude felt for a favour conferred, and the difficulty or inconvenience that the doer of it is put to in conferring it. If the rich give their time to the poor instead of their money, they part with a commodity which the poor see is valuable to the givers, and consequently esteem the attention the more, as it implies an interest in their prosperity; and a feeling seems to be engendered in their minds of unwillingness to press on the kindness of those who thus prove themselves

* *Note by Dr. Chalmers.*—It is of the utmost importance to attend to the explanation given in this paragraph of the Report. The imagined difficulty of the new system is felt only at its outset, which once overcome leaves the duties of a parochial agent quite easy. If even a very small proportion of the parish managers give way to the press of applications which come upon them at the first from people eager to try their liberality, their districts will soon get into disorder, and a very small proportion of such districts will upset any parochial enterprise conducted on the principle of moderate means and strict economy. Whereas, by a few months of perseverance, each elder or deacon, when his character for patient and thorough investigation comes to be known, will purchase for himself an exemption from all unwarrantable applications, and at length enjoy all the benefits of a strenuous and pains-taking inquiry without the actual trouble of it.

The effect in diminishing the number of applications would be the same if, instead of a vigilant agency, there were simply no law of compulsory provision. In the one case the small number of applications would be owing to the circumstance that the parish managers *will not give*, in the other to the circumstance that they *cannot give*.

† There is no conclusion to which the evidence I collected more frequently or forcibly led me than this concerning the injurious effects of the simple gift of money or necessities from the rich to the poor. The opinion which the facts I witnessed seemed to me to warrant was, that all charity of this sort, *except between those of equal rank*, was invariably detrimental to the receiver. This Report was written some time before I had read any of the Reports of my coadjutors, several of whom I see have arrived at the same conclusion. See especially Mr. Chadwick's Report on Spitalfields, p.

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themselves ready to sympathize with them in distress, and to do their utmost to relieve it. This feeling acts as a spur to the exertions of the poor; their efforts to depend on their own resources are greater, and consequently the chance of their becoming dependant on the bounty of others less.

In St. John's parish this personal attendance on the poor is carried to the greatest possible extent; every application for assistance is sure to be met with patient attention, as far removed as possible from magisterial haughtiness, and instead of the continued bickerings between the overseer and the objects of relief, which frequently characterize the administration of an English parish, a friendly intercourse between rich and poor ensures to the latter a ready relief and a just appreciation of their distresses, to the former, that their bounty will not be abused, or their attentions be undervalued or unacknowledged.

The Barony parish comprises the north suburb of Glasgow, and contains, by the last census, 77,383 inhabitants. Previous to 1810, in which year its population was about 36,000, it had never been assessed; and the annual cost of the poor did not, up to that time, exceed 600*l.*, raised gratuitously. In that year an assessment was laid on to the amount of 1,500*l.*, which in 1818 had increased to 3,400*l.*, or to nearly six times what was found sufficient under the ancient system; since which time the poor expenditure has been advancing with alarming rapidity, as will be seen in the annexed Table of the sums levied for the last eight years.

ASSESSMENTS in Barony Parish.

	£.		£.
1825 - - -	3,500	1829 - - -	5,500
1826 - - -	4,000	1830 - - -	5,500
1827 - - -	4,000	1831 - - -	7,500
1828 - - -	4,500	1832 - - -	6,500

The following Table gives the collections at the church doors, the sums arising from proclamations or marriage fees, and the average number of poor on the roll each year during the last four years.

YEARS.	Church Collections.	Proclamations.	Number of Poor on the Roll.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
1829 - - -	212 - 2	161 16 6	1,567
1830 - - -	193 14 10	169 - -	1,709
1831 - - -	140 18 -	173 8 -	1,702
1832 - - -	131 17 5	188 10 7	1,620

These facts fully bear out the conclusion to which I have so frequently alluded respecting the injurious effects of assessments, and their tendency to increase when once introduced. In the space of 20 years from the period when they were commenced they increased eleven-fold, though during this time the parish has only doubled its population. The poor on the roll have been augmented in the same ratio, and the voluntary donations are yearly declining, being now little more than half what they were four years ago. In this last particular the parish presents a lamentable contrast with St. John's, in which the yearly donations are more than three times as large, though it is undoubtedly the least wealthy part of the city; while the barony is seven times as populous, and contains the most magnificent and fashionable residences in the neighbourhood.

I was told that with the increase of poverty since the introduction of assessments the independence and high-mindedness of the poor had sensibly relaxed; that parochial assistance, which was before taken as a charity, is now demanded as a right; and that the shame and hesitation at receiving it, which was once perceptible, is now nearly vanished.

The southern suburb of Glasgow, the whole of which usually passes under the name of the Gorbals, contains a population exceeding 40,000 inhabitants. Till very lately the old Scottish system of non-assessment prevailed in this district, and its good effects were displayed in a manner perhaps more remarkable than in any other part of Scotland. In 1818 a distinguished writer, after mentioning several instances in support of the position, that the

Appendix (A.) real wants of the destitute may safely be left to the spontaneous efforts of private charity for their relief, speaks of this suburb in the following terms :

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E. C. Tufnell, Esq. " But all these minor cases of illustration are lost and forgotten in the princely example of Scottish independence held out by the Gorbals of Glasgow, a parish of which we are substantially correct as to the argument, when we say, that it extends not by a single inch beyond the masonry of its work and its dwelling-houses ; a parish of which we believe that it claims not a single acre of ground beyond the site that it is built upon ; a parish, at all events, which has not one fraction of territorial revenue or importance attached to it, but which includes within the little sweep of its boundary, a busy and industrious population of nearly 20,000 individuals. Had it stood by itself, we confess we should not have looked on the history as in any way miraculous ; but, standing as it does within the walk of one minute from a great pestiferous vomitory, that sends a withering influence on every side of it upon all that is delicate or noble in the character of our Scottish population, it would be a most violent suppression of the gratitude and estimation which are felt by us, did we refuse to acknowledge that though we had travelled for evidence over the whole length and breadth of our land, we could not have met a more wondrous or substantial testimony than the one which this parish affords. And when it is told that the average of its regular annual expenditure is a gratuitous sum of 350 *l.*, and that the whole sum required for the extraordinary wants of last year was 835 *l.*, which was also raised by voluntary subscription, and that among the administrators for the poor, who does not feel a desire that this stately monument of the truth may ever remain unimpaired ; that, standing on the brink of a great moral contagion, it may serve as a protecting vanguard of resistance to the country in its rear, and be our proudest bulwark of defence against such an invasion as England has long been threatening, and in which if she succeed, she will do more to destroy and to desolate our land than she ever has done or ever could do by the invasion of her arms."

The desire of the writer has not been granted ; and this " stately monument of the truth " is now in process of rapid decay. Great part of the district was assessed, for the first time, in 1824, and the remainder in 1827, and already the evil of the change has become apparent. This year the assessment amounted to 1,900 *l.*, which, with the collections, proclamations and funeral donations, make the total of the poor's funds 2,180 *l.* The population, since 1818, has not quite doubled ; and since, at that time, as above stated, the average annual expenditure for the poor did not exceed 350 *l.*, the present cost for their relief shows an increase of more than six-fold. All the evidence that I have been able to collect from the residents goes to prove the fact, which is corroborated by so many other examples, respecting the baneful influence of assessments on the morals and numbers of the poor. The reluctance to apply for parochial charity has greatly diminished ; pride and independence of spirit is fast vanishing ; and the general morality perceptibly on the decline. Since, in the short time that has elapsed subsequently to the first laying on of the assessment, the poor expenditure has increased with the extraordinary rapidity as above stated, it may be predicted, that if a change is not quickly made in the method of management, containing, as it does, in the vast numbers of its humble inhabitants, all the elements fitted to provoke the evil, it will become one of the worst conditioned parishes in this part of the kingdom ; and this " princely example of Scottish independence " be turned into a receptacle of pauperism, misery and vice.

I have selected the parish of *Canongate* in Edinburgh for my Report, on account of the system introduced by Dr. Chalmers into Glasgow having been tried in it. It was shortly, however, given up, the reasons for which, and the result of the experiment, are stated in the following paragraph by Sir John Sinclair, who took considerable pains to make himself acquainted with the circumstances of the case. The traces of the system may be seen in the Table which follows, where the diminished expenditure and fewer paupers, during the years when it was in operation, mark the incipient success of the attempt.

" The several parties concerned in the management of the poor having agreed to receive no more paupers into the charity workhouse, the kirk session of Canongate, on the 10th August 1820, at the request of the heritors, undertook to support all the paupers on the out-pension list, and to meet all new applications for relief from the collections at the church-door and the other parochial funds, without the aid of an assessment. After the necessary arrangements were completed, they received a list of out-pensioners from the charity-workhouse, amounting to upwards of 90, all of whom, after due examination, they admitted on their new pension roll ; and from that date to the 16th April 1823, they continued to receive on their list all the new cases that occurred. From the limited sums above stated, they not only supported the paupers in the parish in a way more agreeable to them, but during their management paid the sum of 131 *l.* 8 *s.* 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* to assist in supporting the poor in the charity workhouse and liquidating its debts ; the assessment levied during the above period being also appropriated to that purpose. There can be little doubt that, had the session continued to manage the affairs of the poor till those in the charity workhouse had died off, they would have finally delivered the parish from assessments. But the heritors and trades, thinking themselves too much overlooked in the administration of the parochial funds, desired to have the charity workhouse re-opened and the management of the poor placed on its former footing ; upon which the kirk session, disgusted at so ungrateful and vexatious an interference, abandoned their whole design."

PARISH OF CANONGATE, EDINBURGH.

Year ending May.	Assessment.			Debt.	Number of House-Paupers.	Cost of each House-Pauper.	Number of Out-Pensioners.	Cost of the Out-Pensioners.
	£.	s.	d.	£.		£. s. d.		£. s. d.
1821	302	—	—	648	89	7 18 10 ½	99	208 13 —
1822	390	16	—	560	70	7 13 5	not given	86 — —
1823	444	3	—	250	51	7 19 4	not given	30 11 —
1824	631	16	—	250	64	8 16 4 ½	not given	33 8 —
1825	490	16	—	350	73	8 8 1 ¼	90	271 17 —
1826	559	4	—	450	76	7 17 3	103	282 9 —
1827	641	3	—	450	90	6 18 7	121	268 1 —
1828	541	15	—	600	88	7 4 6	135	308 14 —
1829	562	—	—	550	84	7 12 2	137	311 4 —
1830	744	11	—	550	81	7 2 9	154	321 1 —
1831	571	—	—	550	85	7 8 9	146	275 8 —
1832	733	—	—	550	80	6 14 2	134	301 19 —

N. B.—The column headed “Debt” shows the sum which, at the end of the year, the parish was found to owe.

DALKEITH, HADDINGTONSHIRE.

Population 5,586 ; supported chiefly by its weekly Corn Market.

I have given a minuter account of this parish than of most others, on account of the retracing process having been lately begun, from a state of pauperism perhaps as bad as any in Scotland, to a sound moral condition, and it is highly important to mark the progress of the experiment. Its minister, the Rev. Mr. Monteith, has only been appointed six months, but he had previously paid much attention to the subject of pauperism, having resided in Glasgow, where, in discharging the duty of a deacon in St. John’s, he had a considerable share in producing the reforms in that parish, of which I have given an account in another report. Before his appointment as minister in Dalkeith, the parish had been much neglected by his predecessor; the large but injudicious charities of a very rich resident had covered the place with paupers, the assessments had been yearly increasing, and altogether its state, as respects its pauperism, was as bad as it could be under the Scotch system of poor-laws, and the task of regeneration apparently hopeless.

Large quantities of soup and other articles were given away last year, when the cholera was expected, and the donations were attended with the bad effects which this sort of charity seems always to produce, decay of self dependence, and instead of gratitude, complaints from the poor that the soup was not good enough for them.

The assessment was first laid on in 1814; a poor-house had been established; and the uniform manner in which the poor expenditure has increased during the last 10 years will be seen in the subjoined Table :

Years ending in October :						Poor-House Expenditure.	Out-Pensioners’ Expenditure and Casual Paupers.
						£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1823	—	—	—	—	—	207 — —	208 4 —
1824	—	—	—	—	—	225 4 —	166 14 —
1825	—	—	—	—	—	237 13 —	160 8 —
1826	—	—	—	—	—	240 14 —	183 19 —
1827	—	—	—	—	—	262 18 —	125 8 —
1828	—	—	—	—	—	284 15 —	176 13 —
1829	—	—	—	—	—	287 14 —	198 9 —
1830	—	—	—	—	—	304 19 —	241 17 —
1831	—	—	—	—	—	315 13 —	234 10 —
1832	—	—	—	—	—	324 4 —	296 1 —

The reforms were commenced with the poor-house, which was not only a source of great trouble to the managers of the parochial concerns, but also of great expense. Many poor persons in the town were found willing, for a very trifling sum, to admit paupers into their houses, who were thus all boarded out, and the workhouse abolished.

The parish was previously badly supplied with means of education, being the only one in Scotland which I have met with in this condition; to remedy this, the poor-house, emptied

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of its former inmates, was turned into a school for 300 children, who pay each 1*d.* a week, which defrays all the expenses of their education, and thus what was a receptacle of degraded poverty and nurse of pauperism, has been turned into a source of the greatest moral improvement.

Each pauper, while an inmate of the poor-house, was estimated to cost the parish 3*s.* 7*d.* a week. The cost of lodging them in the town is 6*d.* a week, and they are paid in general 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, one or two as much as 2*s.*, but others who could do a little work, only 1*s.*; this it will be perceived is a considerable saving to the parish*.

If it is discovered that a pauper has spent any part of his allowance in whiskey, it is stopped for the next month. Payments are also, with a view to prevent drinking, frequently given out in necessaries, in lieu of money.

The practice, as respects the treatment of women with bastard children, had been, as is very usual in assessed districts, fitted to encourage profligacy. The minister, soon after his arrival in the parish, was called on by eight women with bastards, who demanded the usual assistance. The fathers, persons in low condition, and mostly the worst characters in the parish, declared they were unable to support the children, upon which they were instantly threatened with imprisonment if they did not maintain them, the consequence is, they did and do. The child of one of them, as the mother had been seduced under promise of marriage, and there was a prospect of reform by her admittance as a servant into a respectable family, where she had the offer of a place, was taken care of by the parish, to be paid for however by the mother, (the father not being to be found), after a few months. The other seven were dismissed with a lecture, and the way in which they had been treated becoming quickly known, the result is, there has not been a single application for the support of a bastard child since, and though six months have elapsed, not even a case of pregnancy is known.

When the project of abolishing the poor-house was first mentioned to its inmates, they were very averse to leave it; now, however, they are all pleased with their change of situation, and would be very unwilling to return to it. As I was desirous of ascertaining this fact, and also of seeing the condition of some of the poor who had been turned out of the workhouse, I requested the minister to accompany me to one of their houses. We accordingly visited three persons, one old man and two old women, who were lodged together in one room, for which the parish paid 6*d.* a week, which, with 5*s.* a week between them, was all they got. Had they remained in the workhouse, the expense would have been 10*s.* 9*d.* per week, at 3*s.* 7*d.* each, thus the parish gains by the change 5*s.* 3*d.*

The apartment in which they lodged was clean and well kept, and though of course below the average of comfort, it contained several of those conveniences usual among persons in their rank of life. They expressed themselves contented with their condition, and as preferring a private lodging, where whatever was about them they could call their own, to residing in the poor-house. The charitable sympathies of the neighbours, which were before thoroughly dried up, both as respects them and every other inmate of the poor-house, had begun to operate in their favour, and they were receiving some little attentions from their friends, which the minister confidently expected would increase, and that this, together with the produce of what slight work their infirmities would allow them to perform, would shortly enable him to diminish their pay, and perhaps to withdraw it altogether. Thus the expense to the parish is diminished one half, and will perhaps cease entirely, the paupers are happier, and the benevolence of the neighbours called into action. The last is the important point to observe, as on the calling into existence the formerly slumbering virtue of charity, the minister depended for the abolition of assessments altogether.

The above is an instance of the mode by which the parish is becoming disburdened of those who are already paupers; but I was also desirous of seeing how a person was prevented from coming on the poor's-roll at all; I consequently made myself minutely acquainted with the last case of this sort that occurred.

A poor woman in the decline of life, who had always borne a respectable character, lost her husband, and being utterly unable from age to earn sufficient to maintain herself, she was obliged to apply to the parish. The patent way under the old system would have been, to send her to the workhouse, where, at the cost of 3*s.* 7*d.* a week, she would have passed the remainder of her days in the restraint, and comparative misery and dirt of that institution. As it was on the charity of the inhabitants (which had been wholly deadened by the old system of management) that dependence was chiefly placed for keeping the woman off the the poor's-roll, the minister used the most strenuous exertions to excite the benevolence of the neighbours in her behalf. He accordingly went about amongst those whom she had known, and asked them whether they could not contribute each a penny a week, either in money or provisions, to assist their friend whom they had known in better circumstances. Several of them willingly assented. He then stated her case to an indigent sick society, an institution supported by voluntary contributions, which allowed her 3*s.* 6*d.* a month; and having placed her in a lodging rent free, which costs the parish 6*d.* a week, she is enabled to live without further assistance. This allowance of 3*s.* 6*d.* the minister said he did not intend to continue beyond one or two months, when, by means of knitting and other slight work, and the increasing contributions of her friends, she will be able to live decently, and be for ever saved from the degradation of a poor-house and parish support.

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* A man and wife and four children can live very well in Scotland on 10*s.* a week.

It may be said that in a workhouse she might have laboured with her hands equally well; but this is not so, for all her necessary wants being supplied by the institution, she would neither have had the stimulus to look after work, nor the same motive to perform it when obtained to the utmost of her power as she has now, when every additional earning tells more perceptibly on the sum of her comforts. I visited her house, and found it furnished with all the neatness and comfort to be seen in one of the best English cottages; she was perfectly contented, and expressed herself very thankful for the kindness that had been shown her. One of the reasons why she was able to get more from her neighbours than the other three paupers is, she had a better character; and it is this discrimination of private charity which constitutes its chief value and superiority over public.

Even before the minister had brought his reforms into operation he was so confident of their success, that he reduced the assessment from 10*d.* in the pound on the rental to 8*d.*; and in the course of a year or two he expects to abolish it altogether, and depend solely on the church collections. These, as might be expected, have considerably increased, but from the short time that the minister has been in the parish, it is impossible to contrast the receipts, from this source, of a year under the old and under the new system, but taking a month under each, the result is, collections in September 1831, 3*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*; in September 1832, 5*l.* 16*s.* 11*d.* The increase being chiefly in halfpence, showing that the feeling of charity is resuscitating among the poor. It is needless to remark on the moral effect that the practice of benevolence has on those who exercise it.

The activity and perseverance displayed by the Rev. Mr. Monteith in the prosecution of his design is beyond all praise; his labours, however, will shortly cease by their becoming unnecessary, for there cannot be the smallest doubt that he will succeed in extirpating pauperism (as distinct from poverty) from his parish*; that then the revised habit of private charity will be all-sufficient to relieve, and far better and more copiously than any public fund, whatever instances of distress may occur, and he will be exempted from all care and annoyance on the score of pauperism ever after.

I have thought it expedient to give this rather extended account of this parish on account of the interesting appearance which it presented at the time of my visit, being in the very labour of passing from the old system to the new. A year ago it presented one of the worst examples in Scotland of pauper management; a year hence it will be in as good a state as a Highland parish. To show how so complete a reformation is effected is the object of the foregoing account.

DIRLETON.

Agricultural Parish: Population 1,384.

This is one of the most interesting parishes I have visited, as it presents one of the very few instances that Scotland affords, of the abolition of assessments. I have, consequently, thought it expedient to give a short history of its condition previous to that event.

Before the year 1804, the poor of Dirleton were entirely supported by the church collections, and the interest of a small sum that had been left to their use. In fact, the money arising from these sources was occasionally beyond the demand for it, insomuch that the session found themselves at times in the possession of a residue, which they distributed among the poor of neighbouring parishes, a thing now, I believe, unheard of in any part of Scotland.

The two unfavourable seasons that preceded 1804, caused a much greater application to be made to the poor's funds than before; and in this year the heritors and kirk session, unable to meet the demand by the ordinary sources of income, instead of enlarging their donations, introduced an assessment, which at first only amounted to 20*l.* The rate at which they increased, and their whole progress at intervals from beginning to end, will be seen in the annexed Table.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1804 - - - -	20	-	-	1814 - - - -	94	10	-
1806 - - - -	30	-	-	1816 - - - -	105	-	-
1807 - - - -	60	-	-	1818 - - - -	105	-	-
1809 - - - -	40	-	-	1820 - - - -	105	-	-
1812 - - - -	105	-	-	1822 - - - -	73	10	-

It will be perceived that in the last year of their existence, they amounted to 73*l.* 10*s.*, a considerable decrease on former years, which, however, was not owing to any diminution of the poor, but solely to a decrease in the price of provisions, which took place in that year.
The

* It is necessary to bear in mind the distinction (which I have not always observed in this Report,) between poverty and pauperism, which is clearly stated in the 10th chapter of Dr. Chalmers's Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns. Poverty is the allotment of Providence, and to banish it entirely is impossible. Pauperism is the contrivance of man, and dependant for its very existence on his impolitic institutions.

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The truth of this will be shown by reference to "Cleland's Statistics," which give the corn prices in Scotland for a series of years.

It is to be observed, that the year after the assessments were begun, the difficulties that had caused their introduction ceased, but an increased demand for relief had been created by this procedure, and could not be kept down, consequently, the rates went on increasing, till they had reached five times their original amount.

In the mean time the condition of the poor, so far from being improved from the sums spent on them, was rapidly deteriorating. "We are prepared to state, on the authority of the father of the session, who has administered under both systems, that to his knowledge and belief, there has been decidedly more discomfort and discontent among the objects of parochial aid since the introduction of assessments than formerly existed. In point of fact, it was notorious that a work of mischief was going forward. We felt convinced that the wants of the poor increased in the direct ratio to the augmentation of the means of supplying them. We saw an exasperated state of feeling bursting forth from high-raised and disappointed expectations, where formerly there would have been nothing but sentiments of gratitude*." In this state of things every moral means were taken to allay the evil; a parochial library of religious books for gratuitous circulation was set on foot, a friendly society which previously existed, was encouraged to the utmost by the residents, a savings bank was established, and all these schemes were attended with the greatest success.

All these measures, however, though doubtless they had their utility, failed of the desired end, and it was determined to take some more effectual course. A meeting of the heritors and tenants was called, and after some deliberation, they decided on the bold step of at once abolishing assessments. At the same time they agreed to increase considerably their church donations, without which the change could not have been so rapidly made; this, with an intimation from the pulpit of the new arrangements, caused an instantaneous augmentation in the collections, which have ever since supplied the place of assessments.

The change excited considerable clamour among the poor, who thought themselves robbed of their rights; and the minister, the Rev. Mr. Stark, who was the principal adviser of the measure, had to bear much odium on that account; it was, however, persisted in, and the result is given in the adjoining Table.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the Receipts and Disbursements to the Poor in the Parish of
Dirleton, for the Years 1821 and 1831 respectively.

Dr.	£. s. d.	Cr.	£. s. d.
1821:		1821:	
Jan. 1. Balance - - -	1 - 6	Paid to the poor on the roll -	124 5 -
Assessment received - -	97 18 6	Paid legacies, per deed - -	2 10 -
Collections ditto - - -	21 8 4	Casual poor and house-rents -	11 16 -
Interest of mortified money -	44 13 -	Paid for coals - - - -	4 14 1
Mortcloth money - - -	2 11 8	Paid for educating poor scholars	7 1 3
		Paid for book to ditto - -	1 - -
		Paid clerk's salary - - -	5 - -
		Paid beadle's ditto, and fees -	3 6 10
		Paid presbytery and synod's dues	1 3 -
		Dec. 31. Balance in hand -	6 15 10
Total of Poor Funds - - £.	167 12 -		£. 167 12 -

Dr.	£. s. d.	Cr.	£. s. d.
1832:		1832:	
Jan. 1. Balance on hand - -	25 8 11	Paid to the poor on the roll -	93 13 -
Collections - - - -	101 4 7	Paid to lunatics - - - -	19 16 -
Mortcloth money - - - -	1 6 6	Paid legacies - - - -	2 10 -
Received for paupers' effects -	1 10 6	Casual poor and house-rents -	8 11 2
Balance of cholera fund - -	9 4 1	Coals - - - -	6 12 3
Church-seat rents - - - -	3 2 9	Educating poor scholars - -	5 19 -
Interest of stock - - - -	44 - -	Books for ditto - - - -	1 - -
		Clerk's salary - - - -	5 - -
		Beadle's ditto, and dues - -	3 - 4
		Presbytery and synod's dues -	1 3 -
		Incidentals - - - -	- 4 6
		Balance on hand - - - -	38 8 1
£.	185 17 4		£. 185 17 4

Comparison

* This is an extract from a book published by the Rev. Mr. Stark, the minister at Dirleton, entitled, "Considerations addressed to the Heritors and Kirk Sessions of Scotland," from which part of this account is taken. To his untiring perseverance and excellent management Dirleton is chiefly indebted for the improvement that has taken place in the condition of its poor.

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Comparison between the Years 1821 and 1832.

YEARS.	Population.	Number of Paupers.	Lunatics.	Collections.	Assessments.
1821 - -	1,315	36	1	£. s. d. 21 8 4	£. 100
1832 - -	1,384	23	3	101 4 7	none.

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The chief point to observe in this table is the diminution of paupers from 36 in 1821 to 23 in 1832, though the population has simultaneously increased. The increase of the church collections from 21 *l.* to 106 *l.* is also very remarkable. The annexed table is given in order to contrast the condition of Dirleton with that of the two neighbouring parishes of Haddington and Tranent.

—	Population.	Number of Poor.	Amount of Assessments.	Church Collections.	Number of Persons to one Pauper.
Dirleton -	1,384	26	£. none	£. s. 106 19	53 ^{2.3} / ₁₀₀
Haddington	5,883	153	850	44 -	38 ^{4.5} / ₁₀₀
Tranent -	3,620	90	400	13 -	40 ^{2.2} / ₁₀₀

The effect, however, of the non-assessing system cannot at present be fairly seen, nor is likely to be, so long as the places in the vicinity persist in following the ancient practice of assessment. The present success of it has been obtained under every adverse circumstance, under all the difficulties of a new project, without the assistance or countenance of any neighbouring parishes, and with all the effects of their evil example to contend with. What might be the result in Dirleton, were it supported by the practice of its neighbours, can only be conjectured; as it is, I was assured that an improved moral change has already been wrought in the habits of the population. The diminution of paupers has been mentioned; the friendly society, which before the abolition of assessments numbered 86 members, has increased to 120; though the times have been at least as hard since, there are far fewer applications for relief, less clamour and discontent among the poor, and greatly diminished trouble in managing them. The result would have been more marked, had a similar treatment been adopted with the neighbouring poor.

It may possibly be objected that the table of expenses for the years 1821 and 1832 proves little in favour of the new system, since subtracting in each year the sums paid for lunatics who cannot strictly be termed paupers, as no management can either increase or diminish their numbers, the money expended in 1821 for the regular and casual poor, amounted to 133 *l.* 1 *s.*, and in 1832 to 102 *l.* 4 *s.* 2 *d.*, a diminution of only 20 *l.* 18 *s.* 10 *d.* But it must be remembered that the expenditure of a Scotch parish never approaches at the worst the lavish profusion so common in English pauper districts; consequently a reduction of expense is the more difficult to be carried into effect, and must be produced by economising in matters which would be disregarded as trivial in places where abuses in administering the poor-laws exist. But the excellence of the non-assessing system must not be judged of from this test. It is not to save the pockets of the rich, but the principles and morals of the poor, that this system is introduced; its invariable effect is to diminish the demands for relief, but this is of infinitely minor importance in comparison with the moral change it produces in the habits of the poorer classes. This change has been begun and is in progress in Dirleton; and though the expenses were even increased by the new management, the inhabitants would think it a cheap purchase, when the return is the increased industry and morality of the labourers. I have not met with more than one parish in Scotland where the assessments could be felt as a real burthen: the expenses and other evils of English pauperism are at present only in prospect. Therefore, the saving of money can never be an object with those who either oppose the introduction or desire the extinction of assessments in this part of the kingdom. In Dirleton many persons now give voluntarily more than they formerly were compelled to pay legally towards the support of the poor, others again give less, and some little or nothing. But the minister was by no means desirous that each person should give in proportion to his wealth, as the apportioning to each heritor his due share of what was required would have the semblance of compulsion, and in fact would differ little from an actual assessment, and this the poor are quick enough to find out. As it is, they see that the donations are purely voluntary, and consequently are less eager to press their claims on a fund whose existence depends on the kindness of their

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their superiors, and receive relief less as a matter of right than as the effect of the consideration and benevolence of the givers.

The following account of Roxburghshire is extracted from a letter written by a gentleman who has long resided in the county, and is extensively engaged in farming, and who, in the capacity of agent to one of the largest landholders in Scotland, has had every opportunity of gaining an intimate acquaintance with the condition of the county :

" The greatest part of this county, as compared with the southern counties of England, must be termed hilly, if not mountainous, consisting of narrow ridges, separated by small rivulets, and cultivated from the bottom to their summits; these cultivated ridges extend from 70 to 80 feet above the level of the sea to 500 or 600; their steepness in many places rendering the operations of the husbandman rather difficult, and their climate, from their great elevation, considerably colder than on the plains. To these disadvantages must be added, the great distance from lime, which is in general use, few places having that or the coals necessary for burning it nearer than 20 miles. Notwithstanding these circumstances, I estimate that the rent of the arable land may amount on a medium to 36s. per imperial acre, varying from 3*l.* to 10*s.*, below which I conceive it would not be profitable to cultivate.

" The soil, from the causes above stated, varies so much, that I do not conceive that a farm of 100 acres can be found in the whole county of the same or nearly of the same quality. The best lands are a deep loam or a strong clay, the produce wheat, barley, pease and beans; the lighter mountain soils produce oats. I shall give as an example, two farms that have either come within my own knowledge or by information on which I can depend.

" A farm of about 500 acres in the neighbourhood of Kelso was lately let at 900*l.*, and may be thus divided: one third of the first-rate quality, a deep loam; one third second rate, clay loam; and the remaining third moor land, light, thin and friable, some of it inclining to moss. The two first produce wheat and barley, and the last, oats and grass; turnips are raised on all the three.

" Another farm in the neighbourhood of Hawick was let about the same time for 400*l.*, containing about 160 acres, the soil generally good, a considerable part thereof haugh or holm land of a deep loam, and the other parts loam with a small portion of clay; the whole fit for wheat, barley and turnips.

" It may be useful, for the further elucidation of this subject, to state the amount of the assessments for the maintenance of the poor in a few parishes, with the gross rental of these parishes, which I have endeavoured to ascertain as correctly as I could, in order that you may have it in your power to compare them with other parishes in England similarly circumstanced, or as nearly so as can be obtained.

" The gross rental of the town and landward part of the parish of Hawick is estimated at 11,000*l.*, and the poor-rates for the last 12 months as 900 *l.*

" The gross rental of the parish of Wilton is estimated at 5,500*l.*, it is contiguous to Hawick, separated by the river Tiviot, and its poor-rates for the last year are 380*l.*

" The gross rental of the parish of Eckford, situated a few miles above Kelso on the Tiviot, and almost wholly cultivated, is estimated at 8,000*l.*, and the poor-rates at 260*l.*

" From these you will see, that were the gross rental the mode of levying in the parish of Hawick, as in the other parishes purely landward, that the rate would be about eight per cent., in Wilton about seven, and in Eckford about three per cent.

" I ought to have stated before, that the first farm particularized would pay yearly about six per cent., and the last 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. on the rental in poor-rates.

" The following table gives the assessments in the parish of Wilton for the last 10 years :

										£.	s.	d.
1823	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	316	11	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1824	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	284	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1825	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	284	14	11
1826	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	257	-	7
1827	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	274	7	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
1828	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	295	4	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
1829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	335	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	334	7	6
1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	366	2	3
1832	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	384	2	3

Poor-rates levied in Wilton from 1782 to 1792	— from 1792 to 1802	— from 1802 to 1812	— from 1812 to 1822	Average of Ten Years.		
				£.	s.	d.
				939	14	-
				2,105	16	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
				2,253	7	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
				3,500	11	5
				93	19	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
				210	11	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
				225	6	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
				350	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$

In the following table, the amount against 1780 shows the whole sums paid for the poor of Wilton since the commencement of assessments in 1713 to 1780; the sum against 1790, from 1713 to 1790; and so on :

										£.	s.	d.
1780	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,576	5	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
1790	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,448	18	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
1800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,010	5	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
1810	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,291	7	10
1820	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,508	4	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
1832	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,761	11	2 $\frac{1}{4}$

" The

"The improvements in agriculture, like everything else, mainly depend upon the facility and security in reaping its fruits. It is not, I apprehend, so much the amount paid for tithes, that prevents the improvement of land subjected to them, as the paralyzing effects which that foolish law, however wise and well adapted to former circumstances it may have been, has over the mind of the agriculturist, generally not much conversant with calculations having a remote tendency. For tithes, in my opinion, are as much a subject of calculation as rent, or any other obligation that the tenant comes under. After bargaining for a lease, his consideration would naturally be, whether he could make most by further improving the land, or letting it remain in the state in which he received it, and he would pursue that course which appears to him most profitable, and which I am apt to think in most cases, when the calculation is made by a judicious person, would be determined in favour of improvement. But the paralyzing effects of tithes arise from the idea, that the person who has contributed nothing either in skill or capital should reap the fruits of both, and against this no reasoning with the multitude will prevail.

"I am rather inclined to think that tithes, with their obnoxious mode of collecting, have more tendency to keep the rents low than even the poor-rates, but they both operate powerfully in the same direction; the one harassing and constantly irritating the feelings of the farmer, and the other, with equal force, degrading and demoralizing the labourer. The advantages to the clergy themselves of altering the mode of their payment appears to me so very obvious, that I am always astonished that they are not the first to propose a change. The constant collision with their parishioners, which in Scotland is quite unknown, must be highly detrimental to their professional usefulness, for it is not easy for the oppressed, whether in reality or imagination, to admit of Christian attributes to the oppressor.

"The above account of Wilton shows the progress of poor-rates in one parish, (*et ab uno disce omnes*) from which you will observe, that the poor-rates, when once introduced, go on increasing, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance in the managers. The rents, however, in that parish have perhaps increased in a greater ratio, and the population also is advancing from the introduction of manufactures."

As Scotland affords examples, within certain limits, of nearly every mode of poor management, it is possible to trace the successive stages, by which a parish descends from the condition of an industrious and well-ordered community, to the vices and misery of pauperism.

The highest condition is that of a religious and instructed community, in which no money is publicly distributed among the poor, except the church offerings, and those only as a reward to industry and good conduct; in which the people are unacquainted with their legal rights to relief, and consequently the Poor Laws virtually a dead letter. In such a place pauperism and mendicancy are unknown; that the aged or impotent should not be maintained by their relations is counted disgraceful; clamorous demands for parish pay are unheard of, helpless poverty and destitution are relieved as soon as known, by a never failing stream of private charity, seen only in its effects.

The Highlands show many examples of such a parish; a few places in the Lowlands approach this condition, but far fewer than 35 years ago, when in return to the queries circulated for the compilation of the statistical account of Scotland, it was answered by a parish of Mid Lothian, "*No poor either on the roll or begging*;" by one in Peebleshire, "*No poor in the parish, nor had there been any on the poors' roll for many years*." This is the *ne plus ultra* of poor-law reform.

The first step downwards is caused by some over-charitable person leaving a sum of money to be given yearly to the poor, or by some wealthy resident, who dispenses private charity profusely and indiscriminately*, and by his influence in the kirk session, causes its funds

* The following account, extracted from some late travels in Spain, presents a remarkable example of the effects of misdirected charity:—"It is impossible to stir out of doors in Valencia without being beset by beggars, and by others also more decent in appearance, resembling workpeople; the latter are those persons who were formerly engaged in the silk manufactories, but who are now thrown out of work by the diminished trade that followed the loss of the colonies. As for the common beggars, I can only attribute their abundance in Valencia to the easy relief which they find at the convents. Formerly, throughout every part of Spain, the convents fed the poor, and fed idleness at the same time; but now, with the exception of the poor orders of friars, who still continue to give alms, this practice has been discontinued; and to this improvement, for I cannot call it by a better name, I am inclined to refer the fact, that in those cities, which were formerly the most distinguished for the number of beggars by whom they were infested, I found few; and when in Valencia I saw every street swarm with them, and every door beset by them, and when I learned that this city was an exception to the rest of Spain, inasmuch as almost every one of the 49 convents distribute indiscriminate charity, it was impossible to avoid the conclusion, that this had the effect of encouraging idleness, and beggary along with it. In Valencia every idle person is sure of his dinner, and he endeavours by begging to supply himself with a few of those superfluities which the convent does not provide for him." Inglis's Spain in 1830, vol. 2, p. 331. See also Turgot's article in the Encyclopédie under the head "Fondation."

The following extract from some French travels in the Canton of Vaud, so exactly corresponds with what is so frequently seen in English parishes, that it might be taken for a translation from an English poor-law report. It is given to show the universality of the doctrine (and it must be universally true, if true any where) respecting the effect of establishing a "*droit de bourgeoisie*," a right to relief, *i. e.* a poor law:

"Les familles ayant le droit de bourgeoisie, et inscrites sur les registres de la communauté, s'inquiètent très souvent fort peu de l'avenir. Plus d'un chef de maison, comptant sur les fonds communs en cas de besoin, est peu économe et ne travaille pas autant qu'il le ferait, s'il ne savait qu'une caisse est derrière lui pour remplacer par des secours, ce qu'il aurait pu obtenir de son travail

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funds to be distributed with as little judgment as his own. The parishioners quickly learn that they may equally depend on the forthcoming of relief in distress, whether that distress be owing to crime, folly or misfortune: hence one stimulus to good conduct is removed, and the first stage on the road to pauperism is passed.

The springs of industry being now relaxed, poverty increases; requests for assistance from one poor person to another, are oftentimes refused, with the observation, "Go to the kirk session, or Mr. A." Charity, by the example of the rich being disconnected from a feeling of sympathy between giver and receiver, diminishes and partly changes its nature, the moral influence of the exercise of this virtue on the donor is destroyed, and instead of it being necessary to seek for recipients of the church collections, claimants present themselves for it at the session's door.

The third stage commences with a meeting of the heritors to consult concerning the measures to be taken to satisfy the claimants for parish aid, who have increased to such an extent, that the usual funds are wholly unable to meet the expense. They determine to make a voluntary contribution among themselves; the sum required is ascertained, and each heritor promises to give according to the amount of his property. This may be called a mongrel assessment, a semi-compulsory agreement, which the poor see would not be submitted to, were there not a law behind, which forces the heritors to support the indigent. Hence they are taught their rights to relief, and are consequently more ready and pertinacious in demanding it. Dumfries is in this stage.

The fourth stage is a quarrel among the heritors: Mr. B. accuses Mr. C. of parsimony in his subscription to the poor's fund, and of a desire to put off the parochial burdens on his more generous neighbours; Mr. C. indignant, declares, that he will not give a farthing in future, upon which the other heritors determine that he shall not escape, introduce an assessment, and have the satisfaction of opening the purse-strings of Mr. C., and in the course of a few years of paying three times as much as they would under the old system. Many instances might be quoted of parishes that have lately passed this stage.

Pauperism, with all its attendant evils, now advances apace. Parents in their old age are forsaken by their children, husbands frequently decamp leaving their wives and children a burden on the parish, and to such practices little or no disgrace attaches. Charity between neighbours being almost unknown, the first pressure of distress is a signal for an application to the session, where a scanty allowance reluctantly given, and thanklessly received, supplies the place of the ready help and heartfelt sympathy that was formerly on the watch to relieve distress. The fifth stage is now passed.

Here Scottish example ends, and England must be looked to for the sequel. In Scotland the law does not oblige the parish to find work for the unemployed, the legal obligations of mutual support are not confined to natural relations, the law of bastardy does not invite perjury, and the dispensers of the poor-rates are not liable to be controlled by the fears, the follies, or the ignorance of the neighbouring magistrate. All this and worse than this characterises England. But the superior condition of the peasantry of Scotland, should not wholly be attributed to the difference in her Poor Laws, though it is of course difficult to apportion to each cause its due share of the effect produced. She doubtless owes much to her purer morality, to the greater influence of her clergy, which springs apparently from the absence of tithe quarrels, from the equality of church preferments, and the moderate competencies which her ministers enjoy, to her consequent heartier religion, and above all, to her unrivalled system of parochial schools*.

So long as she retains these advantages the worst devised Poor Laws would not reduce her to the condition of our southern counties; should she lose them, and her laws be assimilated to our own, her progress towards pauperism would be even quicker than in England. The liability of a dependence on the poor-rate becoming general must in great measure depend on the standard of enjoyment among the poor, since a pauper's subsistence will be sought for with the greater eagerness, in proportion as it differs little from what is usual among labourers, that is, in proportion as their standard of enjoyment is low. But the standard is apparently lower in Scotland than in England†; all the children of the poor, and

et de son économie. J'ai entendu plus de ces gros bourgeois se vanter de son droit de bourgeoisie, dire que sa famille était une des plus anciennes de la commune, et que de tout temps elle avait vécu des secours de la communauté, sans travailler, considérant l'exercice d'un état ou d'un métier comme au-dessous de sa dignité bourgeoise. Je suis convaincu que si on faisait le relevé des familles portées sur les livres de ces diverses associations, on reconnaîtrait presque partout, que les plus fainéants et les plus dissipateurs sont les rejetons de ces bourgeois qui dédaignent le travail, et qui préfèrent les secours de la bourse commune au prix de leur labeur."

* Howard's Tables show that 58 prisoners only were condemned to death in the space of 20 years in Scotland, whose population was at that time 1,600,000, an average of scarcely three in a year, while, during the same period, 434 prisoners were condemned to death in the circuit of Norfolk alone, comprehending six counties, with a population of not more than 800,000, or one-half that of Scotland at the same time, besides 874 sentenced to transportation, making an annual average of 66 capital convicts.

† Nothing can be more erroneous than the supposition, that the lower standard of enjoyment in Scotland can be owing to the rarity of Poor Laws. The truth is just the reverse. Cobbett, who is violently prejudiced in favour of Poor Laws, in his late northern tour, speaks in the lowest terms of the condition of the labourers in the eastern counties, while he finds them far better off in the west. Had he known that, in the former district, the Poor Laws are everywhere in full action, while over a great part of the latter they are unknown, he probably would not have committed this fact to paper. I may perhaps be

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and about a third of the women, are without shoes and stockings, and oatmeal, the cheapest of diets, is the universal and principal food. Hence the disposition to fall back on the poor-rates would be greater than in England, as the loss of comfort would be less; it would be less disagreeable and discreditable to be maintained by parish allowances when they enable the receiver of them to live as well as he was accustomed to do by the daily exertion of his strength.

Happily the institutions of Scotland place an effectual barrier to her descent into the degradation of English pauperism; the condition of her poor is nowhere so bad but that by well-directed efforts she might speedily recover her ancient eminence, and many instances might be quoted of the reverse process to that which has been described above taking place. In causing this change the clergyman is the usual agent; and it is necessary for this object that he should be a person of activity, possessing considerable firmness and steadiness of purpose, and some knowledge of human nature. He begins by calling a meeting of his heritors, and obtaining their full concurrence in his views. Every new applicant's case is then strictly scrutinized; should he have relations, they are threatened with legal proceedings if they do not contribute to his support; women with bastard children are refused all assistance, and the fathers made fully acquainted, by law or otherwise, with the responsibility which their illegitimate offspring entails on them, in short, all the provisions of the law are rigidly, and perhaps harshly enforced, for the Scottish people are not so hardened as recklessly to brave the punishments which it threatens. In the meantime, moral means are conjoined with legal. The minister continually and strenuously inculcates the duty of private charity, both in the pulpit and by private exhortation; he exerts himself occasionally, in conjunction with his elders, to find work for the unemployed, and assists them in making the most of whatever resources they may possess, matters respecting which dependence on the rates have rendered them careless and improvident, and in which it will be unnecessary for him to interest himself when habits of foresight and self-reliance are again established. Many difficulties present themselves which it requires all the firmness of the minister to overcome. Clamours are raised against him, and he is the object of suspicion and hatred to many of his parishioners, but to an Englishman or an Irishman it may be necessary to make the sarcastic remark, that his ricks are in no danger of being burnt, and that he may rest secure from the assassin's bullet*. The obvious good effects that result from his reforms quickly restore him to the good opinion of his flock; and, in a few years, should his efforts not be counteracted by some external obstacles, such as the neighbourhood of some badly-managed and populous town, he reaps the reward of his labours in seeing pauperism and poor-rates alike abolished.

It will be perceived that throughout the Scotch Reports allusions are made to a principle which is not touched upon in any of the English ones, the consideration of which leads to an important practical conclusion. The attention of the English Assistant-commissioners was, as might have been expected, almost entirely directed to the abuses in the administration of the Poor Laws, and they do not in general appear to have contemplated any reform beyond confining relief to the aged and impotent. In Scotland, these abuses being for the most part non-existent, the bad effects of giving relief even to the aged and impotent, which in England were overshadowed by the magnitude of the other evils, become more glaringly apparent. Hence perpetual reference is made to the charity of the poor towards each other, and the perfect adequacy and fitness of this source for supplying all the wants of the really necessitous attempted to be enforced. It is obvious that this principle, if well founded, strikes at the root of every Poor Law, however little liable to abuse it may be, however incapable of being turned from its original purpose. Were this, however, the only argument, were it simply a question whether the wants of the destitute should be supplied by the willing charity of the poor, or a forced rate on the rich, doubtless it might not unreasonably appear desirable to lay the burden on the latter. But when we find that the result of this is to destroy economy and foresight among the poor, to make children reckless of supporting their aged parents, and relations each other, in fine, to weaken if not destroy every social virtue, and that all this is produced, as Scotland bears witness to, from a Poor Law administered as much as possible *without abuse*, it is surely reasonable to doubt the soundness of the opinion prevalent in England, that a change in the present system is all that is required to remedy the evils complained of, and, it may possibly be thought, that we ought to look deeper for a full understanding of the cause of pauperism.

mistaken in the opinion, that the standard of enjoyment is lower in Scotland than in England. Dr. Chalmers, in the following extract from his evidence before the Irish Committee of 1830, explains how this error, if it exists, may have arisen: "An English traveller coming into Scotland will have an unfair idea of our standard of enjoyment from a mere cursory glance he casts upon the people. He finds them walking barefooted, and perhaps not so respectably clothed as the English peasantry are; and that the general aspect of his house, as to furniture, is more slovenly than in England. But on examining the items of his expenditure, it will be found not only that decent Sabbath attire, but the education of his children, and often the seat-rent of church or chapel, enter into his system of family economics. Taking these circumstances into account, it will be found that the standard of enjoyment is much higher among the Scottish peasantry than at first sight it appears to be."

* In no part of Scotland were there any riotings or fires in 1831 similar to what took place in England during that year. The accurate coincidence of the boundary line of the two kingdoms with the extent of the fires is remarkable. The burnings stopped eight miles north of Carlisle.

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REPORT from P. F. Johnston, Esq.

THE Act of 1579, c. 74, is the foundation of the present system of Poor Laws in Scotland, but the mode in which these laws were carried into execution, such as assessing in equal proportions the heritors and tenants, and other measures of detail connected with their enforcement, originate in proclamations of the Privy Council which that body was authorized by Act of Parliament to issue for this purpose. The rate, instead of being imposed as in England at the discretion of churchwardens and overseers, is determined on by the heritors and kirk session, persons of the greatest respectability and intelligence in the parishes, and who in laying on an assessment impose a tax on themselves. They are thus strongly interested in preventing imposition; and as public meetings are held * *from time to time* for the purpose of scrutinizing the list of the poor, and ascertaining what is necessary for their support, the Scottish Poor List seems rendered inaccessible, as far as human foresight can go, to any but the truly necessitous. The heritors (landowners) who are mostly resident and spend much of their time on their own estates, are always, when absent, represented at the meeting either by their land agent or by one of their most respectable tenants. The idea some persons entertain that it is not desirable that the heritors should attend in person is perfectly fallacious, and it can be proved that the negligence of the heritors in this point has been the cause of much mismanagement. No agent can feel the responsibility of the heritor himself, and the consequence has often been a wasteful outlay of the heritor's money in order that he might by his liberality gain popularity among the poor. A judicious heritor will never assess himself with prodigality against the opinion of the elders, who are supposed to have better knowledge of the wants of individuals, and who from their constant residence in the parish and consequent intimate acquaintance with its concerns, possess every requisite for conducting, in conjunction with the landowners, the Poor Law Administration with effect and without abuse.†

The ordinary source of the poor's funds is the collection at the churches, which is sometimes increased by the kirk session letting out a hearse or mortcloth (pall) for hire, and by the interest of mortgaged money on land. When the money thus raised proves insufficient to maintain the claimants for relief, or in the language of the statute, to enable‡ the *necessitous* poor "to live unbeggared," the law directs the deficiency to be supplied by assessment. § *No liability*, however, rests on the parish to find work for the unemployed, or to give relief to those who are in temporary distress from sickness, bodily injury, or stagnation of trade.

I shall divide the parishes which I visited under two distinct heads, assessed and un-assessed:—

Etterick, Selkirkshire, pastoral parish. Population, 530.

Lord Napier, the only resident heritor in this parish, commenced a few years back that which might be called a *retracing process* (something similar to the plan of Dr. Chalmers), consisting, 1st, Of confining the list of paupers to individuals strictly entitled to parochial aid according to the law, which formerly, in many instances, had been departed from. 2dly, In ameliorating the condition of the peasantry on his property, so as to render them less liable to fall into the condition of paupers. This plan has been attended with such success, that, to all appearances, legal assessments will, before long, altogether die out.

For the last three years the assessment has stood as follows:—

							Assessment.		
							£.	s.	d.
1829	-	-	-	-	-	-	41	3	-
1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	16	-
1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	18	8

The church collections, as is always the case when the assessments decrease, have been (arising either from the moral effect produced on the minds of the people in general, or from the

* In stating that public meetings are held from time to time for the purpose of scrutinizing the pauper roll and assessing themselves, I wish it particularly to be understood that the law of Scotland authorizes such meetings to be held *twice* annually, in February and August, although for the sake of convenience they are more frequently held about Whitsunday and Martinmas. In many parishes, however, they have been extended to *quarterly meetings*—a vicious practice, which, by opening the door four times in the year instead of twice, admits of course of double the number of applications.

† A harmonious meeting of *heritors present in person* with the kirk session, is that which is best fitted for the due administration of the law. Much mischief and mismanagement has been produced from the ignorance of the elders, whose want of knowledge in doubtful or disputed cases which have not passed under their own observation requires the assistance of the better informed heritors, whose liberal education qualifies them to give that aid which is very often much wanted.

‡ The law of the land is not to keep the poor unbeggared, but the "*necessitous poor*," and the heritors and kirk session are the *judges* whether the condition of the poor individuals places them in the state of *necessitous poor* or paupers. The Scots law draws a wide distinction between *poverty* and *pauperism*.

§ *No liability* rests on the parish to find work or to give relief to those in temporary distress; but the *greatest obligation* falls on the kirk session to administer relief to poor individuals in temporary distress, to prevent their becoming *necessitous poor*; and this is done from the collections gathered at church, and becomes preventive charity.

Appendix (A.)

the presence of a resident heritor) simultaneously advancing, as will be seen in the following table:—

Reports.								£.	s.	d.
	1829	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	6	3 ½
P. F. Johnston, Esq.	1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	9	9 ½
	1831	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	18	8

When Lord Napier began his reforms, there were fourteen individuals receiving parochial relief, whose cost to the parish was near 100*l.* annually; by means of strictly scrutinizing in his capacity of elder and heritor the claims of every person applying for relief, the numbers have at length been reduced to five, and the parochial expenditure to 29*l.*, the amount last year, which includes the fees to the clerk and beadle. Of these five paupers, two are idiots, whose maintenance requires 10*l.* yearly; the other three, being able to do something for themselves, receive much smaller supplies. The church collections are dealt out as *interim supplies*, and act as a preventive charity, since being given to persons who are temporarily in distress, in just sufficient quantities to relieve their immediate wants without holding out any expectation of their continuance, the receivers of them are prevented from losing their self-dependence, and never come on the poor's roll at all. A system has also been adopted of letting to the labourer a piece of ground sufficient to keep a cow and to raise garden produce for his family, for which he is well able to afford a remunerating rent to his landlord; an important advantage is gained by this plan, viz. the cottager is more independent, in as much as he has within himself many of the necessities of life which he would otherwise be obliged to purchase. The landlord having thus the possession of his own cottages, is enabled to prevent the settlement of those persons who come into the parish eventually with the view of receiving relief according to the provisions of the law.

It is universally the case in granting leases of lands to tenants, to include with the lands so let, all the cottages inhabited by the various peasantry, such peasantry paying their annual rent to the tenant, and being liable to be removed at every Whitsunday term, at the will or caprice of such tenant. The consequence has been in some parts, that the original and industrious occupiers of the soil have been removed and supplanted by the more needy adventurers from Ireland, who are willing to pay higher rents, work at lower wages, and live in a more degraded state.

To prevent a recurrence of such evils, some proprietors, as before alluded to, have reserved the entire management of the peasantry in their own power, receiving from them their annual rent, affording them such advantages as they have in their power to grant, removing them altogether from the control of the tenantry, and thus forming a bond of union between landlord and peasant, which cannot be attended otherwise than with the happiest result. It may be proper to state here by way of explanation, that the interference of the landlord does not apply to those individuals among the peasantry, who stand in the relation of actual farm servants to the tenant.

The wages of the labourers vary in this parish from 1*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.* per diem, in summer.

Eskdale Muir, pastoral parish. Population, 650.

In this parish there are 16 poor on the roll, who are supported by a legal assessment, amounting annually to 90*l.*, besides the interest of 500*l.* of mortified money. The two principal proprietors introduced the assessment, thinking that the effect would be to keep down the expenditure for the poor. The result has been just the contrary; for both poor and poor rates have greatly increased, and are yearly becoming more burdensome.

Ewes and *Westerkirk* are pastoral parishes, likewise legally assessed, and consequently their poor continually increasing. *Canoby* has a population of 2,760, and 85 poor on its roll, supported at the annual cost of 330*l.*, raised by assessment. *Castleton*, with a population of 1,900, has 74 poor on its roll, whose maintenance consumes 300*l.* of yearly assessment.

In Dumfriesshire, there are eight legally assessed parishes, viz. Langholm, Canoby, Castleton, Ewes, Westerkirk, Eskdale Muir, Moffat and Annan. Their united population amounts to 16,500, and their paupers to 450, the greater number of whom are able partly to maintain themselves, and whose aggregate cost to the parishes is 1,200*l.* per annum.

I now proceed to give an account of some of the unassessed parishes which I visited:—

Kirkmahoe, agricultural parish. Population, 1,650.

The poor, about 16 in number, have always been maintained by the church collections, which amounted last year to 36*l.*, together with some dues on particular occasions, and 22*l.* per annum interest of mortified money, making altogether, with occasional donations, 65*l.* yearly. The heritors in this parish have invariably set their faces against legal assessments, as tending to annihilate those feelings of charity and independence which here, as in most unassessed places, form a prominent feature in the character of the labourers. At the same time, whenever applied to by the minister, they show the utmost willingness to give whatever may be asked of them. Two idiots cost the parish 14*l.* annually. Several of the paupers do not receive above 10*s.* a year, their own industry, and the charity of relations and friends, making up what is required for their support. The allowances are distributed quarterly. The wages vary between 1*s.* 2*d.* in winter, to 1*s.* 6*d.* in summer.

Holywood, agricultural parish. Population, 950.

The average number of poor on the roll is 15, who are paid from the produce of the church offerings and the interest of a small sum of mortified money, amounting together to 55*l.* annually. The greater number earn two-thirds of their maintenance; the remainder, who are

are all either orphans under ten years of age, or infirm persons without relations, are boarded out at the average expense of 4*l.* 10*s.* per annum each. Begging is effectually prevented by holding out the threat, that the allowance of any pauper discovered practising it will be instantly stopped. The kirk session is always on the watch to relieve cases of urgent distress, to provide medical assistance for the sick; and frequently pays for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, to the children of those who are unable to afford the expense themselves. The price of labour is, on an average, 15*d.* or 16*d.* per diem, in winter, and from 18*d.* to 20*d.* in summer.

Tinwald, agricultural parish. Population, 1,250.

The poor, 20 in number, are supported in the same manner as in Kirkmahoe.

Torthorwald, agricultural parish. Population, 1,050.

There are 10 persons on the poor's roll of this parish who receive altogether 31 *l.* annually. As the heritors are non-resident, the church collections amount only to 13 *l.* per annum; the remainder is raised by fines, and the interest of a small sum of mortified money.

Caerlaverock, agricultural parish. Population, 1,200.

This parish affords a striking example of the demoralizing influence of a large legal fund for the support of the poor. The late Dr. John Hutton left many years ago at his death, a sum of money to be given away to the indigent, which now produces 250 *l.* per annum. The consequence is, the poor are more numerous in this parish than in any other place in the neighbourhood; the large proportionate number of 63 persons are in the constant receipt of relief, and the applications are daily increasing. There is hardly a single instance to be met with of those reciprocal feelings of kindness, and those mutual renderings of good offices, which are so common in parishes in the immediate vicinity. The kirk session frequently remonstrate upon the recklessness of feeling and brutality towards their relations manifested by the parishioners, when they are commonly retorted upon by being asked, for what other purpose was the Hutton benefaction left, except to support their poor relations? The farmers complain that, in spite of every effort to prevent it, the parish is filled with the idle, the infirm and the dissolute, and that they find a difficulty in procuring efficient labourers. The poor themselves, so far from being contented, are constantly grumbling at the proportions of the legacy which they receive; and though the kirk session appear to act with the utmost impartiality, they frequently incur the odium of the parishioners for their supposed misapplications of the funds. It is the opinion of the principal residents, and in fact, without this, it is so perfectly obvious that the bad moral and physical condition of the parish is owing to the fatal gift of Dr. Hutton, that it is much to be wished that some method could be hit upon of disposing of the legacy; were it thrown into the sea, it would be an inestimable benefit to the parish.

Hoddam, agricultural parish. Population, 1,500.

This parish, though not yet assessed, is on the point of becoming so. The poor have been for some time on the increase, owing to indiscreet management on the part of the heritors, who have been in the habit of meeting together in public, and voluntarily assessing themselves for whatever was required for the maintenance of the poor, without sufficiently scrutinizing the way in which the money was expended. The parade of these meetings, thus publicly announced and held, has the effect, I was assured, of raising much greater expectations among the poor than it is possible or proper to realize; they imagine that there is a never-failing supply of funds for their benefit, on which they are induced to depend, instead of their own industry, for support in times of distress, and to think that the money thus subscribed is intended to supersede the obligation of maintaining their aged relations. These evils are produced, but in far greater force, when an assessment becomes legal and forced, instead of voluntary; and in this parish the poor, which have increased within a short time from 15 to 30, will doubtless be augmented in a much greater ratio when the assessment is introduced. Another mode in which assessments increase paupers, I state on the authority of Dr. Duncan, the minister of Ruthwell. The tenants, who pay half the rate, are desirous that poor persons whom they employ or know, should get as much benefit from it as possible, and are consequently perpetually bringing forwards the claims of persons who would otherwise not think of applying. In the parishes of Gretna and Kirkpatrick Fleming, the poor list has been much increased in this way.

Ruthwell, agricultural parish. Population, 1,200.

The poor administration of this parish is carried on under the able management of Dr. Duncan, the well-known inventor of savings banks, and to whose evidence before Mr. Sturges Bourne's Committee of 1819, I beg leave to refer for some interesting details on this subject. The yearly cost of the poor is 29 *l.* 10*s.*, the number on the list is 20, and no one receives more than 1 *l.* 8*s.* per annum, their friends and relations making up what is necessary for their maintenance.

Johnston. This parish is partly agricultural and partly pastoral, with a Population of 1,200.

Mr. Hope Johnston, the sole heritor in the parish, was the first to adopt what is now becoming general in Scotland, and which I have mentioned as having been tried with success by Lord Napier at Etterick; viz. the plan of letting out the farms without the cottages attached to them; and thus reserving to himself the control and superintendence of the inmates.

Appendix (A.)

Kirkpatrick Juxta, a parish in exactly similar circumstances, has been treated in the same way.

Reports.

P. F. Johnston, Esq.

The population of the *unassessed* parishes, of which I have given an account, amounts to 11,000, and their number of paupers to 175. If we consider that the above-mentioned assessed parishes contain 450 paupers to a population of 16,500, we find, that were the unassessed ones in a similar condition, they would be burthened with 360 paupers instead of 175. This comparison places the voluntary system in a favourable point of view, but it is unfairly made towards the unassessed parishes, as among them is included Caerlaverock, which contains more than a third of the 175 paupers, and whose affairs are conducted on a directly contrary principle to that which forms the chief value of the system pursued in the unassessed districts.

Dumfries. Population, 11,606.

The poor expenditure of this parish has considerably increased of late, owing to the ravages of the cholera, which have been more fatal in this town, proportionally to its population, than in any other place in Scotland, no less than 500 persons having died of it. No assessment has hitherto taken place in it, though it was proposed a short time ago to introduce one; all idea, however, of taking this step has been for the present abandoned. A poor-house is kept up, into which the infirm and orphans are admitted, and which at present contains 51 persons within its walls; the inmates are all kept at work, and receive a certain proportion of what they earn. The total number of poor at present in the receipt of relief is 568, many of whom do not receive more than 14 s. a year. The poorest of the applicants, to the number of 50, were formerly permitted to beg within the parish, being compelled at the same time to wear a badge; the permission, however, is now withdrawn, and all the poor, who gained their livelihood in this way, have been taken on the pension list.

The town is divided, in conformity with the system introduced at Glasgow by Dr. Chalmers, into thirty-eight visitorships, over each of which presides a Deacon, a person not in orders, and whose business is to manage the poor of his district. He advances out of his own pocket whatever sum he may think necessary for the wants of any applicant, and at the end of each month reports the case to the kirk session, by which he is reimbursed for what he has expended. The smallness of the visitorships enables each deacon to exercise a close scrutiny over every pensioner's condition, by which imposition is rendered impossible, or at least difficult; and many are prevented from applying for assistance, and exert themselves the more to keep off the poor's roll, from an unwillingness to submit their private affairs to this strict investigation, which is never omitted.

The following TABLE, part of which was furnished by Mr. *Tuffnell*, gives the pauper condition of several Parishes last year. The column headed "Voluntary Contributions" includes, besides the Church Collections, Mortified Money, Fines and small Sums arising from other casual sources of Income; but the collections form, by far, the greater part of it.

NAMES OF PARISHES.	Population.	Assessment.	Voluntary Contributions.	Highest rate of regular Relief per annum.	Number of Poor on the Roll.
		£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
Cardross - - -	3,596	None.	387 10 -	12 - -	73
Roseneath - - -	825	None.	169 - -	4 - -	20
Row - - -	2,032	None.	99 2 -	6 - -	26
Ruthwell - - -	1,216	None.	44 - -	1 8 -	17
Yarrow - - -	1,221	195 *	- - -	6 10 -	35
Gretna - - -	1,909	None.	100 - -	9 2 -	27
Greenock - - -	27,571	2,650	590 - -	9 4 -	950 †
Etterick - - -	530	28	12 18 -	7 16 -	5
Anworth - - -	830	None.	110 - -	3 - -	10
Girthon - - -	751	None.	491 - -	10 8 -	47
Kirkpatrick Fleming -	166	347	9 10 -	8 8 -	33
Hoddam - - -	1,582	None.	200 - -	9 2 -	40
Dumfries - - -	11,606	None.	1,218 - -	4 16 -	568
Lanark - - -	7,672	350	50 - -	6 - -	50
Gordon - - -	882	133	16 18 -	7 - -	27
Dunbar - - -	4,735	320	58 - -	4 16 -	99
Kirkmahoe - - -	1,601	None.	65 - -	6 - -	16
Holywood - - -	1,066	None.	55 - -	4 10 -	15
Eskdalemuir - - -	650	90	6 - -	6 - -	16
Westerkirk - - -	642	130 ‡	- - -	6 - -	32

* This includes the voluntary contributions, which are inconsiderable.

† Workhouse poor not included.

‡ This includes the voluntary contributions, which are inconsiderable.

AN ACCOUNT of the State of Pauperism and the Remedies proposed in the Stewartry of Kircudbright, communicated to Mr. Johnston by Mr. Brown, an intelligent and active gentleman at Gatehouse of Fleet.

THERE is a singularity in the case of pauperism, that the very means employed to relieve it, unless prudently and judiciously managed, have a tendency to increase the evil they are intended to prevent, and thus frequently do more harm than good.

The more that is done for the poor, the less will they feel inclined to do for themselves, and therefore they should be thrown as much as possible upon their own resources; it is only when their energies are roused by necessity that habits of indolence, to which they naturally gravitate, can be overcome, and that their ingenuity can be set to work, to find employment for themselves. Necessity, in this as in many other cases, becomes the mother of invention, and calls into action new powers and resources, which they probably were not before aware of or conscious that they possessed. The poor would thus be taught to perceive that the chief causes of poverty and also the means of preventing it depend, in a great measure, on their own conduct, and that nobody can do so much for them as they can do for themselves. It would be desirable that parochial relief were to be restricted to the support of the sick and the aged only, for the great abuse of the Poor Laws in England seems to have arisen from relieving able-bodied labourers, by increasing their wages out of the poor rates; whereas they should have been left to depend on their own resources, and to make up for low wages by greater industry and by practising a more rigid economy: early habits of prudence and frugality would thus be formed by their young families, and a foundation laid for future comfort and independence. Early marriages, to which parochial relief has given rise, have greatly tended to the increase of poverty. Education would help to counteract this evil, as it would inspire them with a taste for comforts and with a spirit of independence, and with an ambition to better their circumstances and to endeavour to rise in the world, which are the great forces that set all industry in motion, and make life so busy a scene. As the taste and intelligence of the labouring classes improved, their wants would increase, and a proportional increase of industry would be called forth to supply these wants; and when they saw that they must depend entirely on their own exertions for the enjoyment of comforts, habits of prudence and a desire for accumulation would be formed, to enable them to provide for a rainy day.

I am sorry to observe that there has lately been a considerable increase of pauperism all over Scotland, and particularly in Galloway, owing, I think, chiefly to the great influx of Irish labourers, who, from their being content to live in huts, to feed on potatoes, to be clothed in rags, and to have their wives and children occasionally begging, are enabled to underbid or underwork the Scotch labourers, who are thus compelled either to leave the country or to descend into the same level and adopt the same habits, in order to be able to come into a fair competition with them. The Scotch labourers have lost all that proper pride and spirit of independence which they formerly possessed, and consider it as no disparagement to be put on the poor's roll; this degradation lessens their self-esteem, and has a most demoralizing effect on their character; they feel that they have to a certain degree lost their former station in society, and become more reckless in their conduct and more careless in observing the decencies and enjoying the comforts of life. They have also lost much of that anxiety for the future, which led them to provide for sickness or old age, and much of that caution and prudence in their conduct for which they were formerly so proverbial.

A modified and well regulated system of Poor Laws in Ireland would (whatever might be its effects there) be of very great advantage to the labourers of this country, whose condition would soon be greatly improved, and who would no doubt soon again acquire all their former prudential habits and spirit of independence. This would also be an advantage to Scottish proprietors, for if Irish competition continues, they will soon have to pay much more in poor rates than the amount of any additional increase of wages that would arise from the want of such competition.

Another cause of poverty is the habit of drinking ardent spirits, now become so general among the labouring classes; its effects are most pernicious, not only from injuring their health and paralysing their industry, but in depraving their character, and rendering them insensible to all respect for public opinion or regard for decency of conduct.

The high duties on malt which have prevented home brewing of beer, and the great number of tippling houses now allowed, have been the chief causes of this unfortunate change in the habits of the people. If the malt tax were to be greatly reduced and farmers and others again allowed to brew their own beer, I have no doubt that the habits of the people would soon return to what they were in the good old times. This subject is worthy the attention of the Legislature, for taxes should be imposed, if possible, in such a way as neither to fetter the industry nor injure the moral habits of the people. Excessive taxation, however, has a demoralizing effect, especially among the lower orders, as it increases poverty with all its train of evils. The support of illegitimate children is often a burden on the kirk session funds, and the parents often escape on account of the expense that would be incurred in a prosecution to compel them to provide for their offspring.

I have stated some of the chief causes of pauperism, and I am confident that unless some measures are taken to prevent the constant influx of Irish labourers, poor rates will soon be imposed all over this country. The parish of Girthon contains about 1,700 inhabitants, 1,300 of whom reside in the burgh and the remainder in the country part of the parish.

Gatehouse cotton mills having been stopped several years ago, the houses formerly occupied by the spinners are now inhabited by Irish vagrants, who pay their house rents weekly, and they, in case of sickness or want of work, soon come upon the poor's roll: when any of them leave the place, their houses are immediately occupied by other vagrants, who contrive to subsist often by pillage, begging, poaching, &c. The whole of one of the streets of Gatehouse is inhabited by such characters, which is a great nuisance to the place, besides being a burden to the poor funds, and a great loss to the proprietor, who suffers from poaching and the pillaging of his plantations, &c. probably more than a hundred pounds yearly. If a law could be made to compel the feuars or proprietors of houses to support such of their tenants as became paupers, the evil would be completely checked, for there are not more than two or three paupers that belong to the country part of the parish; the paupers in the town being all, or nearly all, Irish. If the time of industrial residence in a parish were extended to seven instead of three years, it would tend to lessen the claims on the poor funds and excite more industry and economy among the labouring classes. It is

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to be hoped that the Legislature, from the information they will acquire, will be able to devise some means for checking the increase of pauperism in this country. I ought to apologize for the length of this letter, as I feel ashamed, when I consider that the gentleman to whom it is addressed possesses infinitely more knowledge of the subject than his present correspondent can pretend to. I shall be happy to forward the other circulars as soon as I receive them, and to answer any farther queries which you may find it necessary to make on the subject in relation to this part of the country.

A COMMUNICATION from the Rev. Mr. Colin Smith, of Inverary, to Mr. Johnston, relative to the Management of the Poor in *Argyleshire*.

THE first question to be determined is, Who are the poor? Those whom we acknowledge as entitled to parochial relief are, first, Such individuals as are totally incapacitated by age or sickness to earn their own subsistence, and who have neither children nor relatives to assist them, or whose children or relatives are only able to afford a partial relief. This class does not arise at once in any parish. They are the most necessitous, and they are generally persons who have been long upon the list of paupers, and have grown old or sick; sometimes, indeed, sickness, or the death of a dutiful child, casts the feeble and the aged at once upon the parish; but it may be considered that for the most part they are the individuals who previously composed the second class of paupers, which is formed by such persons as have so much health and strength remaining as to provide a partial subsistence, but who are unfit for any general service. This class consists generally of women from the age of forty-eight to sixty, and it is seldom that a man is admitted into it, or even lays claim to admission. Ill health or some accidental injury does, however, sometimes constrain even men to rank themselves among paupers of this class. The reasons why women crowd this class are, that sometimes ill health unfits them for labour, and sometimes they become unqualified for general service in families about the age of forty-four or forty-six. Few will hire them after this age. For a year or two they contrive to support themselves by their savings during the past seasons, and by labouring in barking wood in summer, or cutting corn and winning hay in harvest. When the few pounds they have saved are spent, nothing remains but the occasional labour in summer or harvest, and the deficiency must be made up by private or public charity. Young widows are often placed in similar circumstances, and maimed men.

The third class is formed of persons who are reduced by peculiar circumstances to temporary distress, and who burden the parish for a short time only, *i. e.* while their distress continues.

The fourth class is composed of the children of paupers, and of delinquents who fly the parish, leaving their unprotected offspring behind, and of lunatics who have no relatives able to support them without assistance.

There is a fifth class of paupers, who belong sometimes to no particular parish, or who are travelling to their native parish, and who require assistance to defray the expense of lodgings and victuals on the road.

As to the mode of ascertaining who ought to be included in any of the above classes of paupers, or in what class any individual ought to be placed, there is often much difficulty, because, as the circumstances of the pauper must determine the measure of relief given him, the third class often endeavour to prolong their apparent distress by finding unlaboured-for money sweet; the second class are sometimes disappointed in procuring service, or disqualified by peculiar circumstances from accepting it—sometimes they are deterred by indolence from doing any thing for their own support, and too often induced by indiscretion to squander the sums they have earned. Sometimes also individuals in each class have relatives or children whose circumstances make it questionable how far the burden of the former should be sustained by the public, and occasionally modesty and a love of honest independence make it difficult to discover the destitute or starving situation of persons who ought to have support. In order to ascertain the true claims of each, as well as to discover cases in which charity ought to be exercised, this and the generality of parishes in this country are divided into districts. Each district in the country portion of this parish consists of from twelve to twenty families, and in the burgh of from twenty to thirty families, and over each there is a deacon or elder (both being church officers) placed, whose duty it is to know the pecuniary circumstances as well as the moral habits of each individual intrusted to his care. These elders and deacons are almost always men of tried benevolence, whose religious opinions and moral conduct give an assurance of their interest in the general welfare, and no sooner does any case of distress occur in their bounds than it is made known to them, and they in their turn make it known to the kirk session.

Each elder and deacon have a strong disposition to procure as much relief as possible for their own district—the distress in which they see with a microscopic eye—but in order to prevent any undue relief or partiality to any particular district, there are sometimes in the session gentlemen who know the state of the whole parish, and are able to check any unfair representation which may be made of the situation of an individual, and who, along with the minister, weigh all the cases impartially. In this parish I have considered it my duty to make myself acquainted with the circumstances of every man who is a pauper or likely to become one, to know the number of his family and their situation in life, his relatives, or any other friends upon whom he may have claims for relief; and I believe that in almost every instance I have been enabled to adjudge the sums granted proportionably to the exigencies of the paupers.

When a person requires relief, he applies first to the deacon or elder of his district, then by petition to the session, who receive more minute accounts of his situation from the said deacon or elder, and appoint one or more other deacons to examine into the situation of the person making application, and to report accordingly.

When a person is discovered to be in want, who from any motives concealed it, the deacon or elder of the district informs the session, and relief is given him, in a manner which may destroy as little as possible his love of independence; of course the deacons and elders have no pay; they are gratuitous labourers, rewarded only by the good they do.

The second matter of importance is, What are the funds from which the poor are supplied?

In this and many other parishes in the county there is a fund, arising from money mortified by some benevolent individuals for the poor: these sums are generally very trifling, compared with those required. In the parish of Glenurchy there is 160 *l.*; in Kilchlenan, 64 *l.*; in Kilbrandon, 65 *l.*; in Kilbride, 40 *l.*; in Kilmore, 32 *l.*; in Kilfinan, 10 *l.*; in South Knapdale, 20 *l.*; in this parish about 250 *l.* The interest only goes to the poor.

The second source from which the poor are supplied is from the collections at the church-door. This varies exceedingly, according to circumstances; such as the residence or non-residence of heritors or other wealthy individuals, the influx of travellers, the popularity of the minister, and the character of the inhabitants.

In several parishes where the number of poor may be 30 and the population 1,120, the whole annual collection may not amount to more than 12 *l.* You will see numerous examples of this kind in Sinclair's Statistical Account, as under the head of Kilchrenan, Kilmodun, Kilmerton, Kilminan, Saddle, &c. In this parish the population is about 2,150, the poor on the roll 55, the annual collection at the church-door from 55 *l.* to 60 *l.*, and when the family of Argyll used to pass part of the season here, the annual collections amounted to from 90 *l.* to 100 *l.*

The third source is fines imposed on fornicators and other delinquents, dues paid by those who are married with fewer than three proclamations of banns on three several Sundays, dues paid by those who use the mortcloth in interring their dead, and occasional collections from the sick and from travellers. The amount of all these, in many parishes, may not amount to 4 *l.*; in this they may average at about 12 *l.*

The fourth source is a donation of 20 *l.* annually from the Duke of Argyll, to the poor of the parish of Inverary. This mode of increasing the poor fund is not uncommon, where the heritor is wealthy and also non-resident. I could if necessary state, upon the authority of the minister, the names of parishes where the laws for enforcing relief are not put in execution, and where the heritors give not a penny, however claimant the cases of distress may be. I need not say that such conduct is most vexatious to those who bestow their time and their means for the support of fellow-beings, who are too often, it is to be feared, ruined by the exactions of these same landlords, combined with their own folly in offering or promising more for their possessions than they know them to be worth. It is conduct also which is very impolitic, as it tends to constrain kirk sessions to put the Poor Laws in force; a resource which would be ruinous to industry and independence, but which has been often represented to me as the only one left to kirk sessions.

The third consideration is the amount of relief given to the poor. Generally, they who receive parish support have free houses, though this is neither always or necessarily the case. In this burgh there are several houses allotted for the poor by the Duke of Argyll, but the number is so great, that these houses do not accommodate more than a third of those who receive support. Many have pensions from his Grace of 2 *l.*, 3 *l.*, 4 *l.* or 5 *l.*, according to their circumstances, and some even more than this; of course these pensions pay the rent, and render the sum necessary for supporting them smaller.

In the landward part of the parish several of the paupers have also small pensions, and their houses are either free or rented from one of the tenants for a few shillings. The poor in the country have also potatoe ground for as much manure as they please; and this is freely given by the tenant, as an accompaniment of the cottage.

The first question to be resolved in determining the amount of relief, is whether the claimant be in the burgh or landward part of the parish? If in the burgh, rather more is allowed. To an insane female in the burgh, who has a pension of a few pounds from his Grace, we give from the session 1 *s.* 9 *d.* per week. Before she got her pension she had 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per week; but as she had a grandson in the house, who was also unable to gain subsistence, and required her daughter to be in constant attendance, her relatives complained that it was too little. We again found it too much, as the woman required to be always kept in bed. Her case was represented to the Duke, and the pension given satisfied her in part, and in part relieved us.

To infirm people of Class 1st, we give from 6 *d.* to 1 *s.* 6 *d.* per week. To those of Class 2d we distribute our collections quarterly, or once in the three months, giving them in the summer quarter, when they have work, about 2 *s.* 6 *d.* and from that to 6 *s.* per quarter; and in winter and spring about 4 *s.* 6 *d.* or from that to 9 *s.* as we can afford. Children that we board out are paid for to cottagers or small farmers in the neighbourhood, where they may get milk and exercise, at the rate of 5 *l.* per annum. Class 3d get according to their need, and Class the 5th, 6 *d.* or 1 *s.*, or what may bring them to the neighbouring parish. These may be taken as instances of the measure of relief given by us, but it is not always so much. There is an insane young man in the landward part of the parish, who is confined with a strait jacket almost always; we give him only 1 *s.* per week. This satisfied his poor parents, who are reduced farmers, for several years, for they knew that we had it not to give; but I may mention, as one of the casualties which often perplex us, that this day I attended the corpse of the young man's father to the grave, and that when the procession left the house, the aged widow, unable any longer to manage her son, though tied in the bed, was constrained to ask the assistance of two of those men who had come to the funeral. In such a case, if we could not depend on the generosity of the Duke, we should have no resource left but to cress the parish. As our former allowance to this man is now altogether inadequate, I must add that the parents, whose name is Turner, though reduced farmers, and natives of this parish, were not ruined on the lands of the Duke, who only sheltered their poverty, but on the lands of Lord Breadalbane, who, when they were left penniless, allowed them to depart in peace. The sums given by us are small. You will be astonished to hear that a penny a day is perhaps as much as many of the poor women in this parish may have. In this, too, they are comparatively well provided for; yet if you would propose to increase their allowance, the question occurs,—How is this to be done?

To put the Poor Laws in force I consider a ruinous measure; for I have sufficient experience to assure me, that, as it is true in mercantile commodities that the supply is regulated by the demand, so that the inverse proposition is true in every provision for the poor; viz. that the demand is regulated by the supply. The pauper who deems himself comfortable with 1 *s.* a week, along with what he procures from private charity, would not be satisfied with five if our funds were increased fivefold; nor would the individuals who live cheerfully upon potatoes and milk, with perhaps porridge once a week, which he earns with the sweat of his brow for himself and family, trouble his body and harass his mind, if a craving application to the heritors and kirk session, enforced by a threat of complaint to the supreme civil court if not aided, were sufficient to procure a more luxurious fare. I know many poor in my own and other parishes, and though there are some poor who have been reduced by great misfortunes to that state, still for every one that misfortune reduces, intemperance reduces ten, improvidence fifteen, and indolence fifteen more. The Poor Laws only provide for the evil when it has occurred; they court its occurrence again, but they apply no remedy; they use no method to root out the disease; they do nothing but harden the hearts of the rich when brought into operation,

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and stimulate the folly of the poor. One good effect, indeed, the Poor Laws in Scotland have while they are not put in force, and it is this,—by putting the poor man in a condition to crave relief as his right, they tend to make the wealthy anxious to discourage vice, and to preserve those beneath them from being reduced to the necessity of demanding compulsory relief. They also prevent absolute and total neglect, which would undoubtedly be their lot if no provision were made for them, a truth which I might adduce facts to prove, notwithstanding the state of the law; and they also are a check upon many hard landlords, who are only prevented from ruining their tenants (who are often too ready to ruin themselves), by the conviction that it is easier to want a few pounds to let the tenant support himself, than to deprive him of all, and then to pay double for his maintenance. In regard to the distribution of money to the poor also, much depends on the manner of giving it, as well as the time. In so far as my other duties have permitted me, I have been taught to have my eye constantly on them, so as to know what private charities they receive, where their provisions fail, when their need is greatest. If they get any aid when they require it not, it is of little use, as they spend it on what is not necessary, and a shilling opportunely given does more good than two when there is no immediate occasion for more than what is already possessed. Money given publicly also is less useful, perhaps for the same reason. We are, therefore, in the habit of giving occasionally to the poor, according to their necessities, and of giving also in a manner which may neither hurt their feelings of independence, nor expose them to their equals as having any thing to spare.

We also give in kind sometimes, rather than in money, because when they get money it is spent often as it ought not to be. They contrive also to exchange the provisions for their favourite beverage; but it is not so easily effected in every case.

In every instance we show as much regard to moral character in our distributions as is consistent with the relief of the individuals, and a few, from 6 to 10, are allowed to beg one day a week within the bounds of the parish, but in no instance are they to go beyond the bounds, under pain of losing parish support. In some parishes in the county they are not so particular in restraining their poor, but are becoming more so.

I omitted saying, that whenever we find an individual very urgent in claiming support, who we think not deserving, that we insist upon his bequeathing his effects to the parish first, and then that his name shall be placed on the roll. If he is not really poor, this never fails in making him withdraw his claims; I have never seen it fail; in ordinary cases we do not resort to this measure, as most frequently the applicants have nothing but a pot, a bed, and a few bedclothes, all of which would not sell for 20 s. When a pauper dies, however, we generally take possession of his effects, if they be of any value at all. The quarterly distributions are announced from the pulpit, on the Sunday previous, and all invited to send in their claims, or to prepare to state their grievances, if they consider themselves aggrieved.

Since I came to this parish, I have been led to consider it necessary to equity and economy, that one person should superintend the distribution, and attend to the wants of the poor, and scarcely a shilling has been given, or a pauper relieved, without my knowledge. Were all to relieve in their separate capacity, the fund would be squandered; were they to give no relief save as a body, and no one individual to have a power of distributing as he saw necessary, it would be so troublesome and tedious as to become impossible and incompatible with the promptness of relief which is often required.

We educate the children of the poor, paying for their books, and sometimes the schoolmaster's charges. Medical relief is not given or paid for by the session. It sometimes is in other parishes.

Every farthing collected or arising from any of the aforesaid funds, is noted down in a book kept for that purpose, and every penny expended in a separate account, bearing when, why, to whom, and by whom given. A state of the accounts is annually laid before the kirk session by the treasurer. I should also have mentioned that part of our funds are in the bank, part lent to the burgh, and part lent on personal security. This last, amounting to 100 l. we have been most anxious to obtain payment of, but have hitherto been unable. This and much more was lent on a similar security before my induction. There ought to be a prohibition against lending the money of the poor on less than heritable security. The lenders in this case are almost all dead. Their heirs are not able, in every case, to make good our loss, if any, and were they able, we could not compel them without risking much of the poor's fund in litigation.

The Poor Laws are not in force in any parish in this county, and so far as I know, to enforce them is an extreme which every kirk session would account a great evil, even though it would prove a great saving of trouble to them, and often of ungracious trouble too; for gratitude is not always the character of any one class of men, nor thanks always the reward of benevolence. The number of paupers in this parish is owing to the influx of elderly women into the burgh, where they get a room for 20 d. or less, and hope to get work; a few years after, they require parish relief. The provision made by the law for expelling those from the parish who have no ostensible mode of subsistence before they constitute residence, is not attended to in Argyleshire. I have had no reason to put it into force. The custom is, if any one, however poor, contrives to get a house or cottage, which is often supplied by the tenants without the knowledge of the authorities, to permit that individual to remain.

The only preventive to the increase of poverty which we have adopted in this parish, is a saving bank and a parochial library; the one to encourage, the other to take some of its charm from dissipation.

The kirk session funds are aided by a fund formed by individuals who contribute a penny a week for the relief of poverty, and by a bazaar; both co-operate with the kirk session. The treasurer and the clerk of session have each 1 l. per annum for their trouble. Such are all the particulars connected with the management of the poor in this parish that I consider of any importance.

THE Assistant Commissioners, who were appointed to inquire into the operation of the Poor Laws in Scotland, in addition to their separate Reports, beg to make some joint observations on one important topic. These will be rather in the nature of a general deduction from the evidence they have collected, than the addition of new facts, and hence the writers may be charged with stepping out of their proper province and trespassing on the duties of the Central Board. But they are induced to take this course, as Scotland, not having been included in the Commission issued by His Majesty's Government, the circulars of Queries were not transmitted to any part of that kingdom, and consequently the Assistant Commissioners who were sent there, are in possession of the only evidence that was furnished by that portion of the empire.

The point to which these observations are intended to be directed, is the all-important one of the policy of having any Poor Law at all; whether there are any sufficient reasons why a statute should exist enforcing any public provision for the poor.

For deciding this question, Scotland offers facilities which are not to be met with in any other part of the United Kingdom. In England and Wales no parish is without Poor Laws, in Ireland no parish is with them; in Scotland the two systems are co-existent. Whole counties are to be met with, where the Poor Laws have never been enforced, and others in precisely the same natural circumstances, where they have existed for a century. Again, parishes with Poor Laws are to be met with in the middle of districts which have none; and conversely, parishes which have none, surrounded by places where they are in full operation. Many parishes, which have never been assessed, have lately introduced the Poor Laws, and the good or ill effects of the change may be accurately traced; while, on the other hand, some places offer the converse example of the abolition of their Poor Laws, having been previously subjected to them. All these different conditions obviously present opportunities of judging of the two systems, which are not and cannot be paralleled in any other part of the kingdom.

But there are other peculiarities belonging to Scotland, which still further assist our investigations into this point. It is always maintained by those who are favourable to the principle of a compulsory provision for the poor, that the evils of the English Poor Laws are owing to the abuses in their administration. Scotland affords a test of the truth of this opinion. Here the English abuses are wholly unknown; the difference in the enactments which enforce the rate and regulate its issue set barriers to their introduction; and the arguers for Poor Laws are doubtless in the right, when they assert, that the Scottish system is the very perfection of a Poor Law, at least as near as human institutions can go. If then it can be shown, that in spite of these advantages, wherever Poor Laws have been introduced evil has resulted, it will go far to prove that the sound policy is to aim at their entire abolition.

Now nearly all the evidence which the Assistant Commissioners have been able to collect from personal inspection, or from hearsay, from statistical facts, or from the opinions of persons conversant with their operation, goes to prove that the principle of Poor Laws is injurious; that the very basis on which all Poor Laws must be founded, the giving to the distressed a right to relief, is essentially productive of evil. Benevolence is the usual ground on which they are defended; and the English statute, which says that no one shall die of hunger, is constantly held up as the model of humane and enlightened legislation. Any one who holds a contrary opinion is instantly assailed with the question, "Would you allow a poor person to die of hunger?" The answer to this is, that in a well-regulated community the fear is wholly groundless. In those parts of Scotland where the Poor Laws are unknown, no instance of a person perishing for want of relief exists on record; on the contrary, these are just the places in which destitution is most infrequent; and furthermore it can be shown that this absence of destitution is owing to the absence of Poor Laws. So far, indeed, are we from allowing that these laws deserve the epithets "humane and enlightened," it is our firm impression that, however benevolent in design, they present glaring examples of inhuman and misdirected legislation.

The most infallible method of increasing the number of poor in a parish is to assess it, as will be seen by referring to those parishes mentioned in the preceding Reports, where assessments exist, from which it will appear that the number of poor in the receipt of regular relief is twice as great in the assessed places as in the unassessed ones. An equally efficacious mode of diminishing poverty in a parish, is to return to the ancient system; unhappily, few instances of such a return can be pointed out, but the examples of St. John's and Dirleton afford incontestable proof of the success with which the retracing process may be conducted.

The effect which assessments have in repressing charitable feelings amongst the poor is very striking; even Ireland offers an aspect comparatively favourable in this view. Dr. Doyle, in his Irish evidence, declares, that if he were to speak till the sun went down, he could not convey a just picture of the benevolence prevailing in the minds and hearts of the lowest classes in that country. Those who are acquainted with the southern counties of England, must be aware that this description is wholly untrue of them; it is partially true of the assessed parts of Scotland, and entirely true of the unassessed.

The increased poverty which accompanies an assessment is partially relieved by it, as the sums given to the poor where a rate is levied are usually six or seven times as much as are distributed among an equal population without rates; but it must necessarily leave a large circle of misery unalleviated, of misery which itself has created, and which it would be too small to alleviate were the amount levied increased so as to absorb the whole land rental. But the immorality which an assessment engenders is its most mournful result, an evil which it tends continually to enlarge, and to which it is incompetent to apply an iota of

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remedy. Its progress is marked by an evident relaxation of industry, by an increase of bastardy, by the forsaking of aged parents by their children, and by a gradual decay of the spirit of independence and forethought. That these are the never-failing effects of assessments is the opinion of nine-tenths of those who administer the Poor Laws in Scotland, of persons who have managed parishes under both systems, and who consequently have had every opportunity of investigating their respective merits. To some of these persons we beg to refer.

The opinion of Dr. Chalmers is too well known to require repetition; we shall only then remark on the injustice that is done him, when he is accused (as he usually is by his opponents) of being a mere theoretical philosopher, issuing his dicta from his closet; whereas he passed many years of his life in a retired country parish, and also in the largest city in Scotland; in both places he applied his views to practice, and the success which then followed them has continued to attend them since his superintendence has been withdrawn. We may also mention as authorities the Rev. Mr. McClellan, the Minister of Kelton, Dr. Duncan, of Ruthwell, the Rev. Mr. Monteith, of Dalkeith, Lord Napier, of Etterick; the two first residing in parishes which have never been assessed, and the two latter being at this moment employed in bringing back their respective parishes to the condition of the ancient Scotch economy, from which assessments had degraded them, and with every prospect—we may say, the certainty—of success.

The evils which spring from poor-rates are not peculiar to them, and may flow from many other causes, the variety of which serve to complicate and perplex the question. Alms-houses, soup and clothing societies may be more truly described as encouragers of pauperism than as relievers of want; and we may mention that the celebrated Heriot's hospital is now considered by many persons in Edinburgh, who have long paid a close attention to its effects, to have been productive of greater evil than good. All the evils of a poor-rate have been created in the parish of Caerlaverock by the fatal gift of Dr. Hutton; and the opinion seems general among the administrators of the Poor Laws in Scotland, that mortified money is injurious to those parishes which possess it. The same effects may follow from the want of education, from mal-administration of the laws and political commotion. In 1698, Scotland, which had then not a single parish assessed, was as remarkable for poverty, for murders and misery, as Ireland is now; it is in evidence that nineteen years of peace and the Education Bill, placed it in that high moral condition for which it has ever since been distinguished. We would not be understood as recommending the immediate abolition of the English Poor Laws; we are simply desirous of stating the conclusion to which we have been led by the preceding evidence, that all Poor Laws are in their essence impolitic and uncalled-for, and that consequently their final abolition ought to be the ultimate object of any changes that may be made; an object, however, that it is not supposed can be attained without being preceded by years of careful preparation for it. The few abuses that exist in the Scotch system make the transition far easier in that country, while the superior moral condition of the unassessed districts holds out an example which courts imitation. The contrast of these two descriptions of parishes seems to prove that many of the evils of the Poor Laws are inherent in the system; that they are evils which the best management may palliate, but which no management can remove.

E. Carleton Tufnell.
P. F. Johnston.

— No. 30. —

NOTES on JERSEY, by *Ashhurst Majendie, Esq.*

THE administration of the relief of the poor in Jersey and Guernsey differs from that of other parts of the King's dominions: whereas in England the rate is levied on occupiers, in Scotland half on proprietors and half on occupiers, in Jersey the assessment is altogether on proprietors. It is made in the nature of a property tax,* principally on landed property, and partly on merchants and tradesmen, on their industry, as it is expressed, that is, on stock in trade and profits. Property is calculated, not in money, but in quarters of wheat, the value of which has been fixed at 16s. 8d. per quarter. The principle of rating proprietors is in theory correct, for unless in periods of fluctuation in the currency, when by a great depression, rent reserved in money bears a false relation to the portion of produce intended to be paid, the maintenance of the poor seems more properly to be a charge on the owner than the occupier; the farmer, after calculating expense of cultivation, interest and profit on stock, making his bargain with the landlord, free from the uncertain demand of poor-tax. Under this system there is no foundation for throwing wages on rent: the farmer not being the party taxed, has no pretence for shifting a burden from himself; and were such an attempt made, the proprietor, who is the party voting the fund, would immediately defeat it. In a small community, where proprietors are generally on the spot and able to watch their own interests, the effect seems beneficial. Pauperism is a rare disease in Jersey. The labouring class retain a spirit of independence highly creditable to them. The wants of the really distressed are relieved either by admission into the general hospital of the Island, or by assistance at their own houses; a kindly feeling exists among all classes towards each other; and the sources of private charity remain unimpaired by maladministration or extortionate demands; indeed, the pride and independent spirit of the labouring class frequently prevent them from making application, and it becomes necessary by domiciliary visits to seek out "les pauvres honteux," and relieve necessities which shrink from exposure. Jersey is divided into 12 parishes; the total population exceeds 38,000. The states possess certain rents devoted to the relief of the poor, which have belonged to them from time immemorial. In the year 1750 Mrs. Bartlett left, by will, the sum of 50,000 livres to the states, in trust for the poor of the island; of this, 40,000 livres were devoted to the erection of the general hospital (the site of which was given by one of the seigneurs of the island), the remaining 10,000 livres were invested in the funds, the interest of which is applied for the benefit of the poor islanders. Other legacies have increased the stock, which amounts to 13,700l. 3 per cents.; the interest 411l. The further sum required for the maintenance of the inmates of the hospital, amounting on an average to about 1,000l. per annum, is raised by a general tax on the island. All the parishes have the right to send to the hospital a certain number of persons, in proportion to the sum assessed on them. If they exceed the number, they pay for the excess; if the number is below that sum, the surplus is carried to the general fund. The proportion in 1832 was as follows:—

The accounts of the general hospital are submitted to and audited by a committee of the states at Michaelmas.

EXPENSES of the General Hospital of Jersey, 28 Sept. 1832.

		Jours.			Livres.	Frs.
258	pauvres à la Charge de l'Isle	23,143	at 9 sous	- -	10,414	7
54	— St. Heliers	11,632	— -	- -	5,234	8
11	— Trinité	2,305	— -	- -	1,037	5
5	— St. Martin	889	— -	- -	400	1
7	— St. Pierre	1,443	— -	- -	649	7
6	— St. Laurent	1,131	— -	- -	508	19
2	— St. Clement	494	— -	- -	222	6
5	— St. Sauveur	1,171	— -	- -	526	19
7	— St. Brelade	581	— -	- -	261	9
3	— St. Jean	902	— -	- -	405	18
2	— Grouville	152	— -	- -	68	8
2	— St. Ouen	701	— -	- -	315	9
-	— St. Mary	-	— -	- -	-	-
362		44,544			Livres, 20,044	16

The arrangement of the general hospital, in which are placed the sick, aged, destitute, foundlings and paupers, is as follows: The master farms the whole, and is allowed by the states 9 sous (4½d.) per day for every inmate, together with half the value of the work, the other

* Every proprietor is bound to give in a return of his property to the King's receivers, or the seigneurs of the different fiefs.

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other half being given to the paupers; by this means the whole charge to each parish is immediately ascertained by referring to the register of entry and departure, and noting the number of days. This plan has been found beneficial on the score of economy; it has been objected to, however, on the ground that a profit is made on the contract for the maintenance of the destitute. The table of diet is calculated liberally. For the aged and sick it seems desirable that everything likely to contribute to their cure and comfort should be afforded, but for those who come under the class of paupers, reduced to the state of pauperism by their own fault, the allowance of meat, five days in the week, seems a quality of diet beyond their desert, and exceeds that which is within the power of the industrious to obtain; it has been suggested, therefore, that it would be desirable to have a workhouse distinct from the hospital. The remaining sources of revenue are, the sums collected as alms, and legacies, which are inconsiderable in amount. In general the object in Jersey is to keep paupers out of the hospital, and among the people there is a sense of shame, both as individuals and as members of families, that any of their relations should become inmates; they therefore make all exertions to avoid it. Some persons receive relief as out-pensioners, receiving a less sum perhaps than they would cost as inmates. The whole charge of "externes" at the charge of the Island in the year 1832, 6,015 livres 18 sous; the whole charge of "internes," externs, repairs, &c., in the year 1832, = 35,345 livres = 1,472 *l.* 14 *s.* sterling.

Each parish in the island is bound to maintain its poor, and birth is considered the only settlement. Proprietors are rated in the parish in which they reside for all their property, wherever situate; none vote by proxy but the seigneurs of the fiefs of St. Ouen, Rozel, Samarés and la Trinité. The assessment is made by the parochial assembly, and there is an appeal to the Cour Royale. The parochial assemblies are regulated by the Order of the King in Council, 1804.

The chief officer of the parish is the *connétable*, or *chef de police*, usually some gentleman of the first consideration in the parish, who is elected every three years by the votes of rate-payers and heads of families. Under him are the officers of the constable. This situation also is one of great respectability, leading to higher offices, and entitling the party to be a member of vestry, and to vote in the elections. The *vingtenier* collects the rate, and pays it into the hands of the constable. Some parishes are in possession of rents by ancient endowment; they are collected in kind, and are sold at the market price, and part paid to the poor fund. The money received at the church door is divided among the out-poor. No other parish has a poor-house, except St. Brelade; this is situated in the town of St. Aubyn, and contains a few aged persons. Relief is rarely given to the able-bodied; any demands from them, unless on account of temporary distress of their families, are rejected; and if they will not maintain their families they are liable to imprisonment by the Cour Royale. The average rate of wages varies from 1 *s.* 8 *d.* to 2 *s.* per day, and all are expected to maintain their families on their wages; occasional assistance is given. The labourers are generally industrious and economical. The allowance system is totally unknown; it was once creeping into practice in St. Brelade's parish, and was producing the usual bad effect. The authorities determined to arrest the progress of the evil; they offered the hospital as the only relief, and the people, said my informant, returned again to industry. If a family is in distress, the father or mother applies to the rector, constable or churchwardens; the family is immediately visited and relieved by the churchwarden. The case is brought before the parish meeting, and they are relieved by monthly or quarterly payments, or are sent to the hospital, or some of the children are sent there; and it has been decided by the court, that the pauper is bound to accept the order of admission to the hospital. This is the practice with parishioners; in case of non-parishioners, notice is sent to the constable of their native parish, by whom they are relieved. The money is paid by the parish to which the family belongs to the churchwarden of the parish in which the family resides: there is a power to remove families to their parishes. The poor man, if dissatisfied with the relief offered by his parish, has an appeal to the court, through the *procureur du Roi*. Relief is given in money or in kind, according to the discretion of the authorities. Appeal against the accounts is by remonstrance to the Cour Royale. By Order of Council, 1797, all the parishes in the island contribute to the maintenance of the widows and orphans of soldiers not having settlement in the island (till their settlement is found), in the same proportion in which each parish respectively contributes to the public burdens of the island.

The position of Jersey, at a day's sail from England, obviously exposes it to the immigration from the pauperized districts of England: there are labourers in full employ in Jersey who are receiving pay from their parishes in England, and some parishes on the opposite coast hold out inducement to their paupers to come over to the island, and the authorities at Plymouth gave 5 *s.* per head to the captains of vessels to convey them. In consequence of the great number so sent over, the States passed a law, that any captain of a vessel who brought persons who became chargeable within six months, should take them back free of charge, and pay all expenses incurred in the island. The evil had become of such magnitude, that in the year 1829 the number of paupers maintained by the Island amounted to 336, whereas the numbers were in 1831, 225, and in 1832, 258; and the general average about 250. The States have the power of passing to the nearest English port any English paupers who become chargeable; in general, therefore, they conduct themselves with propriety, and support their families on their wages.

In ascribing the good condition of Jersey, as regards the poor, principally to good administration of the poor laws, I ought not to omit to notice the extraordinary advantages which the island possesses in the almost total absence of taxation. The attachment which the inhabitants have always shown to the British Crown, and the importance

of the position, has always secured to them the most favourable regards from the mother-country. Except a small duty on wines and spirits, the produce of every climate is imported free of duty. There is a great demand for labour, owing to the influx of families of independent fortune, attracted by the cheapness and the freedom from taxation. A considerable portion of the corn grown in Jersey is exported to England, and corn from France and the northern ports is imported for the consumption of the inhabitants. Cultivation is rapidly increasing; the waste lands are daily brought into tillage; land is much subdivided, and very high rents are given; and general prosperity seems to prevail. The absence of the burden of the abuses of the English poor laws is not among the least of their advantages; and from the information I received, I am inclined to believe that the whole sum of the poor-tax does not amount to 4,000 *l.*; that is, on a population of near 40,000 persons the expenditure does not exceed that of a single parish in a pauperized district of England, viz. Eastbourne, with a population of about 2,700.

Ashhurst Majendie.

EXTRACT from the CODE of LAWS of Jersey.

Reglement pour les Mendians.

Le connétable, principaux et officiers de chaque paroisse, doivent pourvoir pour la subsistance de leurs pauvres respectivement, en louant, ou faisant travailler ceux qui en sont capables, et fournissant aux incapables, les choses nécessaires à la vie, de semaine en semaine; et sont à cet effet autorisés de cōtizer avec l'assemblée des principaux et officiers, les habitans de leurs paroisses respectives, qui sont dans la situation d'y contribuer, de la même manière que sont imposés à chacun, lorsqu'il est nécessaire, tous autres frais et dépenses pour les affaires publiques. Le ministre, connétable, et surveillans en chaque paroisse, pourront donner une licence sous leur mains, aux pauvres invalides, de mendier par les maisons dans leur paroisse seulement. Les pauvres ne seront point souffert de mendier hors de leur paroisse, sur quelque prétexte que ce soit, ni dans leur paroisse, sans la licence susdite, à peine d'être mis au cep par le connétable pour la première fois, et présentés en justice pour la seconde, pour recevoir telle punition qu'il sera trouvé condigne. Les personnes qui par une charité imprudente, donneront l'aumône aux personnes auxquelles il est défendu de mendier, seront tenus de payer 60 sous pour chaque contravention, dont un tiers sera pour le délateur, et les deux autres tiers aux pauvres de la paroisse, qui seront levés par le connétable, sur les plus apparens biens des délinquens, et par saisie et vente de leurs biens, s'ils sont refusans, de la manière que sont levées les contributions pour le maintien des pauvres, et autres taxes publiques. Il ne sera point permis aux étrangers, et personnes qui ni sont point habitans, ni à leurs agens, de louer ni d'emporter hors de cette Isle, aucuns enfans qui soient à la charge des paroisses, ou soufferts de mendier, et lorsque les étrangers, ou non habitans, ou leurs agens, auront loués aucuns autres enfans, ils les produiront au connétable, ou à un des centenniers de leur paroisse, avant de les faire embarquer, afin qu'il soit examiné s'ils sont de ceux en charge, et à peine de 50 livres d'amende pour chaque enfant. Les pauvres qui étant capables de travailler, seront loués ou engagés par les connétables, avec l'avis et consentement des principaux de leur paroisse, ni le seront, s'ils sont de l'âge de 13 ans et au-dessous, que jusqu'à l'âge de 20 ans accomplis; et ceux qui auront plus de 13 ans, ne pourront être loués que pour le terme de 7 années tout au plus, et moins lorsqu'il se pourra.

Les susdites amendes seront applicables moitié au Roi, et moitié aux pauvres de la paroisse où l'infraction sera faite*.

From the information of Mons. Clement de Quetteville, Churchwarden of St. Helier.

ISLAND OF JERSEY.

PARISH of St. Helier, population of the town	-	-	-	-	-	15,000
— population of the country or agricultural part	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Total	-	-	-	-	-	16,000

Number of out-door Poor relieved during the last Year, 1832 to 1833:

Viz. men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
Women	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	76
Boys	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	74
Girls	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	86

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Others having received temporary relief, not included in the above abstract

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Total - - - 290 during the year.

The expenses of which for subsistence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£. 892
— clothing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81
— coals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32

Together - - - £. 1,005

Appendix (A.) The average expenditure for the relief of the out-door poor, for the last three years, has been - £. 952.

Reports.

The standard for relief for children varies from 1 s. to 2 s.; average 20 d. per week.

— for old people, from 1 s. 8 d. to 3 s.; average about 2 s. 2 d. per week.

— for widows with large families of young children, 4 s. to 7 s. 6 d. per week.

Ashhurst Majendie,
Esq.

The poor are paid (in a room adjoining the church) every fortnight, on Thursday morning, from 11 to 12 o'clock.

The profligate, and particularly those addicted to drinking, are placed on bread allowance, a list of which is given to a respectable baker, stating the amount to be supplied per week to each individual or family. The present person has furnished bread, at the current price, for about 10 years, and given general satisfaction.

Applications for Relief, &c.

Able-bodied persons are not relieved, unless under very peculiar circumstances; children, old and infirm people, the sick, and widows left with young families unprovided, are always considered fit subjects for relief, and accordingly attended to.

The person requiring assistance from the parish, applies to the churchwardens; the following questions are then usually made:

In what parish or country have you been born?

Your name and residence?

Your occupation?

Are you single or married?

What family have you, and their respective ages?

From what cause do you stand in need of assistance?

By whom are you known, or what reference can you give?

These questions having been answered satisfactorily, inquiries are made from their most respectable neighbours, as to character, &c.; the party is then visited, and if entitled to relief, the amount is settled at so much per week, at the discretion of the churchwardens; this relief, in the first instance, is placed under the head of *extraordinary*, otherwise *temporary*, which continues, or ought to continue, only until the next parish meeting; then the case is generally submitted by the churchwardens to the parish meeting, for the purpose of placing him or them on the *ordinary*, otherwise *permanent* list. The churchwardens recommend the amount of allowance, which is scarcely without exception granted, unless some members of the meeting, better acquainted with the circumstances of the individual, or otherwise, interfere, in which case the majority of the meeting decide.

Persons applying for assistance, and found not entitled to parish relief, the churchwardens sometimes visit, and recommend the case to the notice of charitable institutions, (the Philanthropic Society, Benevolent Society, &c.), who will cause them to be visited and relieved if found deserving; but should the above societies, from some cause, refuse assistance, the applicant's last resource is to the constable, (more properly the mayor of the parish) who either sends them back to their place of settlement, or places them in the hospital or poor-house, at the Island expense, generally until an opportunity offers of shipping off. This applies to strangers, not natives of the Island.

Persons placed on the ordinary list cannot be reduced, or dismissed, unless by virtue of a parish meeting consenting to it.

During the month of November the committee of the parish, composed of the minister, constable, the two centeniers, the procureurs du bien public, and the two churchwardens, visit the poor receiving parochial assistance, to ascertain the quantity of clothing and coals required for each, of which a statement is made, the former year's list being referred to as a sort of guide.

The delivery of coals is made soon after Christmas; if issued before that time, and a hard winter ensued, a second supply would then become necessary, which by this mode is obviated.

The constable supplies the churchwardens with cash as wanted for the poor's expenditure. The churchwardens' accounts are kept under three heads:

1. The Extraordinary or Temporary.
2. The Ordinary or settled Allowance.
3. The Trésor or Church Expenses, &c.

1st. *Extraordinary*.—The collection of alms at the sacrament table and at the church doors, with donations, by wills or otherwise, to the poor, are carried to the credit of this account.

2d. *Ordinary*.—The parish-rate makes up the whole of the expenditure of this department, with the exception of a small fund, varying from 40 l. to 50 l. a year, carried to its credit.

3d. *Trésor*.—The fund under this head may be calculated, on an average, at 50 l. a year, against which are debited the church repairs and church-yards, &c.

Remarks.

The churchwardens who perform the duties of overseers, are elected annually?

One year in office is scarcely sufficient to acquire the knowledge requisite to fulfil its duties, particularly where so much judgment and discretion is required; it is therefore suggested, that the office should be biennial, and that both churchwardens should not go out of office the same year.

For what reason are the poor when relieved in the first instance placed on the extraordinary list for some time, previous to their being transferred to the ordinary?

To give an opportunity to the churchwardens to dismiss at once the assisted when they deem it necessary; for paupers when admitted on the ordinary, often consider themselves as having an annuity for life, and if reduced or dismissed hereafter, even when their circumstances fully warrant it, think themselves wronged and deprived of their right.

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Esq.

At what age are children supposed able to earn their livelihood?

At the age of 10 or 12, according to the health, strength, disposition, &c. It is highly essential to keep that point in view, the neglect of which is certain to increase pauperism, by producing indolence, idleness and improvident habits, so often witnessed in the children of paupers, becoming such from one generation to another.

ORDRE DE SA MAJESTÉ EN CONSEIL

Au sujet des Assemblées de Paroisse.

AUX ÉTATS de l'ISLE de Jersey.

L'an mil huit cent quatre, le onzième jour d'Août.

MESSIRE JEAN DUMARESQ, Chevalier, President de cette assemblée, ayant remis devant les états un ordre de Sa Très-Excellente Majesté en Conseil, du 31 Juillet dernier, portant la confirmation de l'acte des états, y annexé, du 30 Mars 1804, à l'égard des assemblées paroissiales—il a été ordonné que le dit ordre de Sa Très-Excellente Majesté en Conseil, et le dit acte des états, seront enregistrés sur les records des états, et imprimés et publiés, tant au lieu ordinaire du marché qu'aux paroisses de cette île, pour tirer leur plein et entier effet.

Desquels la teneur ensuit :

AT the Court at St. James's the 31st of July 1804.

Present, The King's Most Excellent Majesty;

Lord Privy Seal; Duke of Montrose; Marquis of Hertford; Lord Steward; Earl Camden; Earl of Winchelsea; Earl of Macclesfield; Viscount Melville; Lord Hawkesbury; Lord Harrowby; Lord Mulgrave; Lord Arden; Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

WHEREAS there was this day read at the Board a report from the Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of Council for the affairs of Jersey and Guernsey, dated the 25th of this instant, in the words following; viz.

"Your Majesty having been pleased, by Your Order in Council, of the 23d of April last, to refer unto this Committee an Act passed by the states of Your Majesty's Island of Jersey, on the 31st of March last, repealing a former Act of the 26th of October 1803, containing Regulations for holding parochial assemblies, and transmitted for Your Majesty's royal approbation; the Lords of the Committee, in obedience to Your Majesty's said Order of reference, have this day taken the said Act into their consideration, and do agree humbly to report as their opinion, that it may be advisable for Your Majesty to approve of and ratify the said Act, and to order that the same be entered upon the register of the said Island of Jersey, and observed accordingly."

His Majesty, having taken the said Report into consideration, was pleased, with the advice of His Privy Council, to approve of and ratify the said Act (copy whereof is hereunto annexed), and to order, that the same, together with this Order, be entered upon the register of the said Island, and observed accordingly; and the governor, or commander-in-chief, bailiff and jurats, and all other His Majesty's officers in the said Island for the time being, and all other persons whom it may concern, are to take notice, and govern themselves accordingly.

Stephen Cottrell.

AUX ÉTATS de l'ISLE de Jersey.

L'an mil huit cent quatre, le trente-unième jour de Mars.

PAROISSANT que le règlement passé par les états le 26 Octobre dernier, concernant les assemblées paroissiales, n'a point encore obtenu l'approbation Royale—les états, après mûre considération du sujet, sont d'opinion qu'en y retranchant le sixième et le huitième article, le dit règlement répondra mieux au but proposé: partant les états sont convenus de rappeler le dit règlement en son entier, et d'y substituer le règlement suivant, moyennant la sanction de Sa Très-Excellente Majesté en Conseil; et ils supplient très humblement Sa Très-Excellente Majesté en Conseil d'y accorder son approbation Royale, afin qu'il ait force de loi en cette île, et y soit observé à l'avenir. Et Messire Jean Dumaresq, Chevalier, Président des états, a été requis d'informer les Très-Honorables Seigneurs du Conseil Privé de Sa Majesté du susdit rappel, et de leur transmettre, en même temps, le présent règlement, à l'effet susdit.

Article I^{er}.—Les magistrats, et les officiers de la Cour Royale, savoir, le procureur-général du Roi, le vicomte, l'avocat-général du Roi, et le greffier; les recteurs (ou le vicaire dument appointé par l'ordinaire, et en absence hors de l'île du recteur, ou pendant sa maladie) et les connétables et centeniers ont séance et voix délibérative comme principaux, dans les assemblées paroissiales.

II.—Ceux qui auront exercé les charges soit de connétable ou de centenier, auront également droit d'assister et voter à l'assemblée paroissiale, quoiqu'ils ne soient plus en charge. Les procureurs du bien public, les surveillans, les vingteniers, les officiers du connétable et les collecteurs d'aumônes, y ont droit seulement pendant leur gestion.

III.—Le nombre des principaux qui seront membres des assemblées paroissiales est réglé, pour chaque paroisse, comme ensuit, savoir:

Pour la paroisse de St. Helier, tous ceux qui payent un rât de vingt quartiers et au-dessus.

Pour les paroisses de St. Ouen et St. Sauveur, tous ceux qui payent un rât de quinze quartiers et au-dessus.

Pour les paroisses de St. Brelade, St. Pierre, Grouville, St. Martin St. Laurens et St. Jean, tous ceux qui payent un rât de douze quartiers et au-dessus.

P. L. (A.)—II.

G G

Pour

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

Ashhurst Majendie,
Esq.

Pour la paroisse de la Trinité, tous ceux qui payent un rât de dix quartiers et au-dessus.

Et pour les paroisses de St. Clement et Ste. Marie, tous ceux qui payent un rât de huit quartiers et au-dessus.

IV.—Il y aura vingt-quatre officiers du connétable en la paroisse de St. Hélier, dont six, au moins, seront des vingtaines de la campagne; quinze officiers en celle de St. Brélade, et douze en chacune des autres paroisses. Dans les paroisses où il y en a présentement au-delà de ce nombre, il n'y en aura point de nouve aux choisis, avant que le nombre soit réduit conformément à cet article. Ils resteront en charge en la paroisse de St. Hélier, quatre ans seulement, et dans les autres paroisses sept ans, et à la prochaine assemblée paroissiale, après l'expiration de la gestion d'aucun d'eux, il sera procédé à un nouveau choix. Si, cependant, l'assemblée paroissiale ne pouvoit trouver de personne propre à remplacer un officier du connétable, après l'expiration de sa gestion, il seroit sujet à y servir encore, s'il y étoit choisi de nouveau.

V.—Les officiers du connétable qui auront atteint l'âge de soixante cinq ans, ou qui seront devenus incapables, par infirmité, de finir leur gestion, pourront obtenir leur décharge avant d'avoir servi le temps prescrit pour chacun d'eux.

VI.—La charge de procureur du bien public, en chaque paroisse, est limitée à trois ans; après lequel temps il sera procédé à un nouveau choix, en assemblée paroissiale, selon l'usage.

VII.—Le recteur, ou le vicaire dument appointé par l'ordinaire, et résidant dans la paroisse, convoquera et présidera les assemblées paroissiales pour les affaires ecclésiastiques, et le connétable, ou chef de police, convoquera et présidera les assemblées paroissiales pour toutes autres affaires l'un et l'autre avertissant, avant la publication, les membres des états résidans dans la paroisse, et prenant leur commodité, pour le jour de la tenue, eu égard à leurs fonctions publiques.

VIII.—Les affaires ecclésiastiques sont comme ensuit: le choix d'officiers d'église, et l'examen et approbation de leurs comptes; la distribution extraordinaire, la réparation de l'église, du cimetière, et de la maison presbytérale; la disposition des bancs dans l'église, et des biens attachés au rectorat; la vente des rentes du trésor, de la charité, et autres biens appartenans au trésor ou à la charité, et le choix du lecteur, du fossoyeur, et du maître d'école, pour être présenté au doyen.

IX.—Chaque président d'assemblée paroissiale sera tenu de convoquer une assemblée dans l'espace de huit jours qu'il en aura été requis par quatre principaux de sa paroisse, ou plus; pourvu que la demande lui en soit faite par écrit, portant date, et mentionnant le sujet pour lequel telle convocation est requise; et pourvu aussi que l'application lui en soit mise en main le jour de Mercredi, au plus tard, afin d'avoir le temps de faire convoquer telle assemblée pour un des jours de la semaine ensuivant.

X.—Toutes les fois qu'un président d'assemblée paroissiale fera convoquer une assemblée des principaux et officiers de sa paroisse, il sera tenu de mentionner, dans le billet de convocation, le sujet pour lequel il appelle ladite assemblée; et aucun autre sujet ne pourra y être traité, excepté pour des objets de sûreté publique et le soin des pauvres.

XI.—Chaque assemblée paroissiale sera dûment publiée par le lecteur, dans l'église, à jour de Dimanche, immédiatement après le service; et dans le cas qu'il n'y auroit pas de service le Dimanche, ou que quelque affaire urgente exigeât la tenue d'une assemblée paroissiale, on y pourra procéder en faisant avertir tous les membres de l'assemblée, par le moyen des vingteniers; mais aucune assemblée paroissiale ne sera tenue le jour même de la publication, ou de l'avertissement, ni le jour ensuivant, excepté pour des affaires de sûreté publique.

XII.—A toute assemblée paroissiale dûment convoquée et tenue, le président sera tenu de mettre en délibération chaque motion faite par un membre, et secondée par un autre membre de l'assemblée, et de recueillir les opinions sur le sujet.

XIII.—Chaque vingtenier, dans l'étendue de sa vingtaine, et en l'absence du connétable et des centeniers, aura le pouvoir, et sera tenu de signifier et faire garder la paix toutes fois et quantes qu'il en sera besoin; et sera également en droit de se faire assister d'officiers du connétable, et tenu de saisir tous perturbateurs de la paix publique, et infracteurs des lois, et de les conduire, sans délai, au chef de police de la paroisse.

XIV.—Le présent règlement n'est point entendu déroger au droit qu'ont le seigneur du fief de St. Ouen, le seigneur du fief de Rozel, le seigneur du fief de Samarés, et le seigneur du fief de la Trinité, de voter dans les assemblées paroissiales, par le moyen de leurs tuteurs ou procureurs, comme d'ancienneté.

Jean De Veulle,
Greffier.

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TO

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R E P O R T

FROM

HIS MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS

FOR INQUIRING INTO THE

ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICAL OPERATION

OF

THE POOR LAWS.

APPENDIX (A.)

Reports of Assistant Commissioners,
PART III.

EVIDENCE collected by *E. Chadwick*, Esquire.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,

21 February 1834.

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R E P O R T

HIS MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS

FOR IMPROVING THE

ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICAL OPERATION

THE remainder of Mr. CHADWICK'S REPORT will be
delivered shortly.

Appendix (A.)

Reports of Assistant Commissioners.

PART III.

Printed and collected by R. Chadwick, Esquire.

Printed by The House of Commons, to be Printed.

21 February 1834.

EVIDENCE taken by *E. Chadwick, Esq.*

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

BERKS.

OLD WINDSOR.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	-	669	932	1,050	1,453

		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	-	£. 802	£. 1,254	£. 1,467	£. 938	£. 962	£. 1,096

NEW WINDSOR.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	3,122	4,340	4,288	5,191

		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	-	£. 1,637	£. 2,006	£. 3,485	£. 2,762	£. 3,397	£. 2,867

Mr. Charles Hodges, Assistant-Overseer of the Parish of Windsor, Examined.

"THE parochial affairs of this town are managed by a committee of twelve inhabitants, and by the parish officers. As the assistant overseer, I receive a salary of 100*l.* When a poor person applies for permanent relief, I inquire into the circumstances of the case, and report to the committee. Casualties are relieved by "the overseer in pay." There are four overseers, and they each take it in turn, for three months, to pay all the parochial demands. Casual relief is seldom given without consulting me. Every shilling or sixpence of casual relief spent is now entered into a book, and the account is examined and passed weekly. I think it requisite, as a security, that all accounts, consisting of numerous items for small sums, should be examined at short periods. This practice has been adopted with us about two years, and has been productive of considerable saving. This saving has been accomplished partly by looking after the accounts, and partly by looking closely after the objects relieved. The practice of making short settlements, and rendering the accounts of each item to the board, is very serviceable to the latter object, inasmuch as gentlemen at the board frequently contribute useful information on the inspection of these items. If the accounts were for long periods, and the items very numerous, they would not be so frequently examined. In summer quarters, the average casual relief may be about 7*l.* weekly; in winter, it may be double that amount.

Accounts, consisting of items for small sums should be examined at short periods.*

"We have no labour to give our paupers but work on the roads. They work from six o'clock in the morning in summer until five in the afternoon, and in the winter from seven until four. To single men a shilling a day is given. To married men with two children we give 1*s.* 6*d.* a day; to men with larger families we give 2*s.* a day. About twelve men, with large families, have their rents paid by the parish. Generally I expect, when we are informed of an application for relief from a large family of eight or nine children, that two or three of those children are grown up and capable of work. Provisions are, I think, somewhat dearer here than in the agricultural parishes: the loaf is a penny or a halfpenny dearer here. We do not consider that 12*s.* a week is more than sufficient in this district to maintain a labouring man and his family. Private individuals do not give more here than 12*s.* a week to a day-labourer. No distinction is made by private individuals between married and single men; they give them the same wages.

"Is the parish work here piece-work?—It is not.

"Then your paupers work less than other day-labourers, do they not?—Yes; they work less time.

Comparison of parish work and private work.

"And within that time do they do as much work?—No, sir, they want a good deal of looking after: they are always on the look-out for me, or for any overseer. There is a superintendent, but he is in fact a pauper, and he is rather easy with them.

"How much less time do your parish labourers work than industrious labourers, who maintain themselves?—About one hour daily, summer and winter. They have also opportunities of picking up a shilling by odd jobs in the town.

"Then a pauper with a family gets from your parish the same wages as an industrious labourer; they moreover get their rents paid; they have opportunities of picking up additional shillings, and they work less time, and do less work than the industrious labourer; and they are also relieved from the burthen of looking out for work?—Yes, that is the case. Formerly we used to give labourers 1*s.* 6*d.* per day, but they complained to the magistrates that

* Where the marginal notes are in *italics*, the portion of the evidence to which they refer has not been published either in the Report of the Central Board, or in the volume of Extracts from the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

BERKS.

that it was not enough to support them, and the magistrates recommended that more should be given. The paupers always, when they think they have not enough, run to the magistrates, and this is a check to any strictness on the part of the overseers.

"What is there to prevent the industrious and independent labourers who have large families throwing themselves on the parish, and placing themselves in the more advantageous situation of paupers?—Only the sense of degradation.

"Is this sense of degradation diminishing?—It is.

"What is the characteristic of the wives of paupers and their families?—The wives of paupers are dirty, and nasty, and indolent; and the children generally neglected, and dirty, and vagrants, and immoral.

"How are the cottages of the independent labourers, as compared to them?—The wife is a very different person; she and her children are clean, and her cottage tidy. I have had very extensive opportunities of observing the difference in my visits; the difference is so striking to me, that in passing along a row of cottages I could tell, in nine instances out of ten, which were paupers' cottages, and which were the cottages of the independent labourers.

Little chance of dispauperizing the paupers unless with very severe measures.

"And what chance do you see of dispauperizing any of the paupers?—None, with the present generation of them, unless with very severe measures indeed. When a family is once on the parish it is very difficult to get them off. We have cases of three generations of paupers. If the overseers were to adopt severe measures to put a stop to the system, the paupers would run with piteous tales to the magistrate, who orders the relief and censures the overseer. If overseers are strict, their conduct is also censured by the local newspapers. Tradesmen in these places will not make themselves martyrs.

"What do you think of the expediency of withdrawing all appeal to the magistrates?—I think it would be advantageous to give the final decision in all applications for relief to the committee for the management of the poor-rates. The thing desirable is, to remove the responsibility from individual overseers. If the decision were with the committee they would be a satisfactory check to any undue rigour on the part of individuals, and would at the same time know more of the merits of each case, and of the testimony, than can be known by the magistrates. One individual may be indiscreetly severe, but in a board selected from such a town as this, it is impossible that a whole board should sanction it.

"Within your experience, how many overseers have been disposed to act with strictness?—In the course of about nine years I have observed about four individuals so disposed out of thirty-four officers.*

"Have you refused applicants relief unless they went into the house?—Yes; and a large proportion decline going into it, and we get rid of them.

"Are there many charitable ladies in your district?—Many ladies very charitable indeed, sir.

"Now

Men of the lower stations of society treat men of their own grade the most strictly.

* Nearly all the permanent parochial officers to whom I have put similar questions, have given similar answers, as to the proportion of those who were disposed to act harshly towards applicants for relief. It appeared from the individual instances which they adduced, that nearly all the persons so characterised were of men who had risen from the lower stations in society. Sometimes a tradesman, serving the office of overseer, will treat with harshness or neglect applications made to him for relief whilst he is engaged in business; but from the testimony which I have received, it may be stated as a general rule, applicable to the questions of making the decisions of elective vestries final on applications for parochial relief, that in boards, composed of individuals such as usually serve parochial offices in the towns, there will always be a secure majority for the indulgent treatment of applicants. This is, indeed, admitted by every one of the few experienced witnesses who have thought magisterial interference necessary for the protection of the poor. The following is an extract from the examination of Mr. Carvill, the assistant-overseer of the parish of St. Bride, in the city of London:—

Reasons for an appeal to magistrates.

Two in twenty men on an average characterised by severity.

Conclusion against appeals to magistrates.

"I think the present mode of transacting parochial business a great grievance; and that there should be one magistrate to attend to parochial business. I think there should be a magistrate to appeal to, as parish officers are sometimes disposed to be harsh towards the pauper. How many parish officers have you known as serving since you were in office?—Twelve. Of that twelve, how many were characterised by undue severity?—Two. What do you consider the general average proportion of men characterised by such a disposition found serving such offices?—I think about two in twenty; indeed, I might say, not one in twenty. Were the men to whom you allude men of education, or men who had been raised from the lowest ranks of life?—They were men comparatively uneducated: they were the most uneducated. Nineteen out of twenty of the persons chosen as parish officers in the city of London, you would then consider as disposed to deal fairly and humanely to a pauper, whatever might be their interest in getting rid of his claim?—Yes, I have no doubt whatever of that. And lean to the side of benevolence rather than of undue severity?—Yes. And would protect the fair claim of a pauper?—Yes. Are you confident of that?—Yes, I am confident of that. If then the final decision of a pauper's claim were left to a board composed of men, nineteen out of twenty of whom are disposed, as you state, to 'lean to the side of benevolence rather than of severity,' and to 'protect the fair claim of a pauper,' whatever might be their supposed pecuniary interest in getting rid of that claim, do you think there would be any danger?—I have not had any experience of the working of a large board of officers."

From the testimony I have received in other cases, I am led to believe that in most instances where an overseer who has risen from a lower station in society is "disposed to be harsh towards the pauper," it will be found that this overseer comes to a conclusion more quickly than his brethren, by judging from his own experience what frugality and industry may achieve, or from knowing better what a person of the condition of the pauper might do. This conclusion being usually enunciated without the reasons, and with uncontrolled temper, has the appearance of harshness and cruelty, though it may be substantially just.

"Now do these paupers, whose wages and residences you have described, receive, in addition to their other advantages of rent-free cottages, easier work for shorter times than independent labourers, derive advantages from the attentions of charitable ladies?—Yes; the ladies are very charitable to them, and are cheated on all sides by them, and imposed upon by piteous stories.

"How long do you think it will be, under these influences, before all the industrious and independent poor will better themselves by getting large families and becoming paupers?—I cannot say, sir."

On a further examination of this witness, as to whether other paupers than those, the rents of whose cottages were paid by the parish, had not demanded similar benefits,—he stated that they had; and that the complaints from other paupers, "who did not see why they had not as much RIGHT as others to have their rents paid," had become so numerous, that the committee had determined that no new applicants should have their rents paid, and that the practice should cease as the present possessors of the privilege died off.

The witness, in answer to further interrogatories, stated:—"In Windsor we have often a great number of artisans and labourers brought into the town by the works carried on at the Palace. About five years ago we had three or four hundred additional labourers. In cases of sickness, or of improvidence, we had sometimes to remove them to their parish. But, more frequently, the mechanics had clubs, and the parish was greatly relieved by their declaring on their clubs on such occasions. In consequence of a suspicion that Government wanted to get hold of their money, the labourers who had constituted clubs in this town broke them up. We had four clubs—we have now only one, and that will shortly be broken up. I never heard the regulations under the new Act particularly objected to. These clubs were, when in operation, a great relief to the parish, and their dissolution will be a severe misfortune to it. We have a savings bank in this town, but I cannot state what is its progress. Mr. Adams, the carpenter, who employs about ten or twelve men, has instituted a fund among his men, who each contribute 2*d.* a week to provide for casualties. In this way a considerable fund has accumulated, and from this fund casualties have been provided for, and the parish has at various times been saved serious expenses. Mr. Ramsbottom, the brewer, has made up a fund of this sort, and when a workman is sick he is allowed from this fund the same wages as when he is in health and at work. In this instance, also, the parish has been saved from serious burdens. I think it would be of very material assistance to all parishes, if the employers of workmen would patronise trade clubs of this sort, and take the trouble of them.

"In this town there are various ancient charities, and we have had instances of people settling in the parish for the purpose of obtaining a share of the produce of these charities."

ST. LAWRENCE, READING.

	1803.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	3,170	3,627	4,091	4,048

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the Relief of the Poor - }	£. 1,444	£. 2,464	£. 2,859	£. 2,052	£. 2,585	£. 3,008

The churchwardens of this parish could give me no information; but they stated that the governor of the workhouse knew every thing about parish affairs, and that he was the only person who could give me full information.

I began my inquiries of the governor by asking him what quantity of food he gave to those under his charge?—"Quantity! why, a bellyful. We never stint them. I stand by the children myself, and see that they have a bellyful three times a-day.

"What descriptions of food do you give them?—Good wholesome victuals as anybody would wish to taste. You shall taste it yourself, Sir. We give them all meat three times a week. The working men have a bellyful. We never weigh anything, and there is no stint, so as they do not waste anything. Then they have good table beer and good ale.

"How many paupers have you generally in your workhouse?—From forty to fifty.

"And what is the quantity of meat usually consumed weekly by that number?—Seldom less than 150 pounds of meat.

"Do you find them in tobacco or snuff?—No, sir; but if they get a few pence, or if their friends choose to give it them, we do not debar them from anything, so long as they do not make beasts of themselves."

I requested to be shown the house. Every thing appeared remarkably cleanly and in good order. He requested my particular attention to the goodness and cleanliness of the sheets and bedding, and the general comfort. He dilated on the quality of the bread, which he showed me. He also gave me some of the table beer and ale to taste. I must do him the justice to state that it was excellent. The table beer was such as in the metropolis is called table ale. But besides these liquors for the use of the paupers, he produced a third specimen, still superior, of which I tasted. This was a most potent beverage. It was two years old; and he said he generally reserved it for the overseers after the performance of a "dry day's work." The paupers themselves appeared to be very strong and healthy, and the children the most so of any that I had observed in the district. He pointed out to me one pauper, a remarkable hale-looking man, of 63, who had with his wife, been on the parish

Funds for providing
against sickness in-
stituted by trades-
men.

In giving food never
weigh anything; no
stint.

Do not debar paupers
from anything, so
long as they do not
make beasts of them-
selves.

Paupers' ale.

Overseers' ale.

Appendix (A.)

Paupers better off
than labourers;

more than 40 years, and in all probability would live more than half that time longer on their charge. The governor, it appeared, had been a farmer many years ago. I asked him—

“Do you think the condition of these paupers better or worse than the condition of the agricultural labourers thirty or forty years ago?—A great deal better off than the labourers forty years ago.

“Than the agricultural labourers of any class?—Yes sir, I know they are a great deal better off.

“And what is the present condition of the independent labourers, as compared with that of the labourers at the time you mention?—I think they are not quite so well off. To be sure they got less wages, and clothing was dearer: they only got 7s. a week. But then, on the other hand, they only paid 8d. for the gallon loaf. I think they were better off. There are too many labourers now, and labour is more uncertain than it was then.

better off than half
the rate payers.

“I may say, then, that not only is the condition of those under your care better, as regards food, clothing, lodging and comfort, than the labourers who toil out of doors; but that they are under no uncertainty, and have no anxiety about providing for themselves?—Yes, sir, you may say that. You may say, too, that they are better off than one-half of the rate-payers out of the house. I know the rate-payers; I know what it is to be a rate-payer; and I know that a great many of them are worse off.”

In the course of my inspection of the workhouse, I observed that the men's rooms were all locked. I inquired the cause of this—that they may not come in and lie down before bed-time.

Paupers' life.

“That is, I suppose, that they may not escape from their work?—No, sir, we have no work here, even for those that might work: it is that they may not come up here and lollop about, and roll about in their beds after dinner, or when they are tired of doing nothing.

Friends of paupers
hardly know them.

“How does this sort of life agree with them on their first entrance?—Wonderfully well, in general. Sometimes, when they come in very low, and on the brink of starvation, the great change in the way of living is too much for them; but when they get over the change they go on surprisingly. Their friends, when they have any, come in to see them, and have sometimes been quite surprised at the change, and hardly knew them again, they were looking so well. We had an old woman brought in not long ago; she was so very low and feeble, that you would have thought it impossible she could live long; but now she is one of the most active women of her age, and will live, I dare say, a great many years more; they will say themselves they never were so well off before. There are some, it is true, who cannot bear even our regularity, and prefer the dog's life of hunger and liberty; but in general they never leave us.”

Some more fond of
the dog's life of hun-
ger and ease.

The majority of
paupers undeserving.

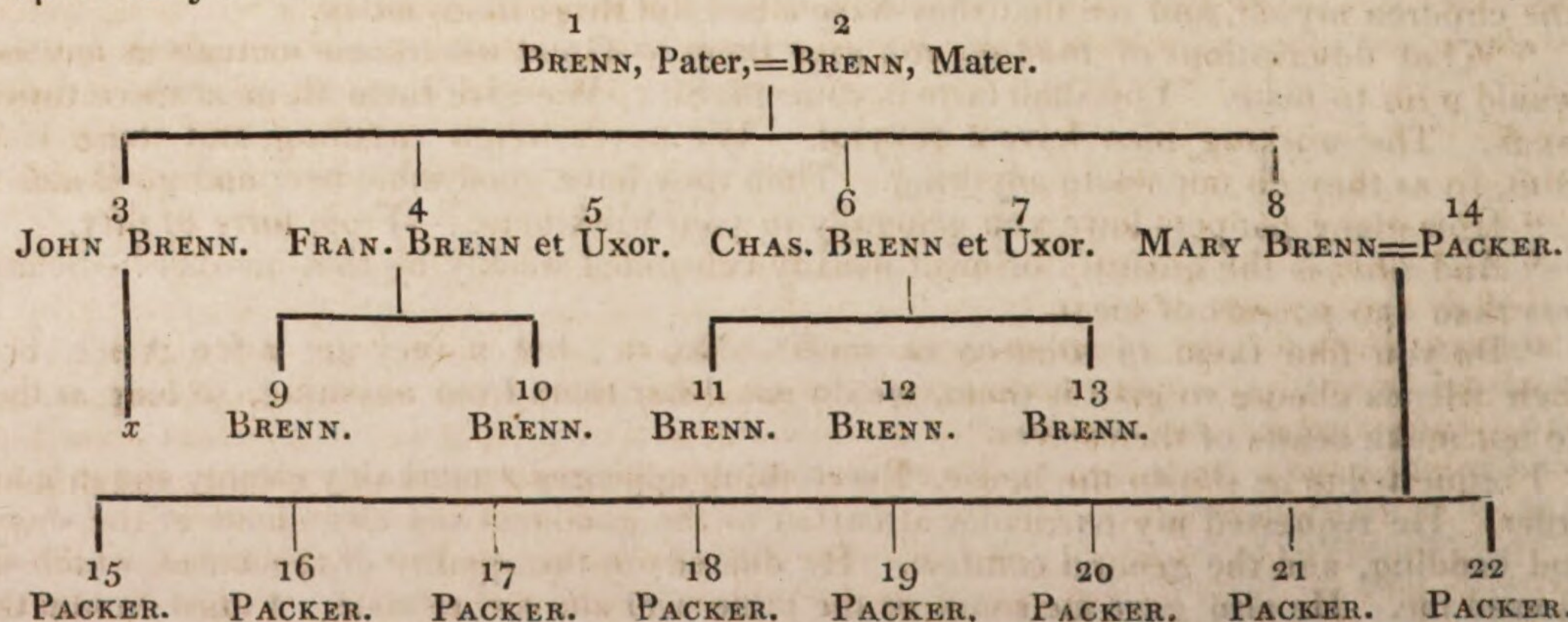
In answer to my interrogatives, as to the general character of the inmates, he declared that the great majority of them were undeserving characters, who had been reduced to poverty by improvidence or vice.

The male and female paupers were separated in the night, but in the day the young girls and the mothers of bastard children, and all classes might meet and converse together in the yard.

On examining the books containing the list of the out-paupers, I found the management equally characteristic; out-door paupers having nearly the same amount of wages allowed them without work, that could have been obtained by independent labourers by hard work: the pauper having in addition to the money payments, frequent allowances of clothes from the parish, and payments on account of rent, and “other advantages.” I made inquiry into the case of the persons of the same name first presented on opening the book, when I found them to consist of a pauper family of three generations, the whole of whom received upwards of 100*l.* per annum from the parish. The parents of the pauper stock were described as remarkably hale old people in the workhouse, who had lived on the parish upwards of 40 years. The father was the man who had been pointed out to me, as an instance of the care taken of the inmates, he having lived so long and so well on the parish. I took down their names in the order which exhibits the genealogy of the living pauper family:—

A pauper family.

A genealogy of living
paupers.



Population, factitious
increase of.

I asked the governor how this last and most widely-spreading branch arose?—“That,” said he, “was one of our overseer's doing. I warned him against it, but he would do it. Brenn's daughter became pregnant by a weaver, named Packer, and the overseer made him marry her; and see what the parish has got by it!—eight more mouths to feed already, and eight more backs to find clothes for.

“How many more paupers do you consider the parish may receive from this said stock?—Two or three score, perhaps.”

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
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BERKS.

The progenitors lived in the workhouse at an expense of not less than 10s. per week, (the average expense of the inmates, children included, being about 5s. per week each;) Charles Brenn, who was an out-parishioner, received 7s. 6d. per week, besides shoes and stockings; Francis Brenn received 6s. 6d. per week; John Brenn is a mechanic, I believe a weaver, at present resident in London, and had 3s. a week sent to him,—on what ground except as a patrimonial claim, on what evidence except his own statement that he wanted it, and must return to the parish if it were not sent to him, I was unable to ascertain. Packer, for himself and family, received 13s. a week of the parish, and “various other advantages.”

I inquired with respect to the out-door paupers in general, as well as with respect to this pauper family, in particular, whether they got no additional “relief” from charitable foundations and benevolent people?—“Yes,” said the governor, “we have a great many benevolent people in this town, and they help. There is always something or other given; a great deal of coal is given away, and the churchwardens give away linen.”—He admitted, in answer to further inquiries, that the greatest impositions were practised on the most humane people. One of the paupers had declared to him, that he had as many as six shirts at a time given to him by different benevolent people. It was intimated that, as a matter of course, these things went to the pawn-shop for drink. He expressed an opinion that coals were the best commodity to give away, “as coals cannot be pawned!”

Additional resources
of the out-door poor.Coals the best thing
to give away in
charity, as coals can-
not be pawned.

On inspecting the accounts of the disbursements, I found that the supplies of meat and various other commodities were purchased of different tradesmen. This was done to “give each tradesman a fair advantage,” and “that they might have no ground of complaint.” For the same reason it was a rule never to buy anything out of the parish. The overseers are mostly small tradesmen.

Tradesmen’s equal
division of parochial
patronage.

The governor “could not make it out,” but the poor’s rates were increasing: they were 3s. 6d. in the pound the last half year, and a 4s. 6d. rate must be called for, for the next half year, and the parish was already 200*l.* in debt. “Something,” said he, “must be done.”

ST. GILES, READING.

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	3,416	3,660	4,014	4,749

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	£. 1,264	£. 2,066	£. 2,344	£. 1,949	£. 2,391	£. 2,432

IN my visit to this workhouse, I was accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Milman. I stated to the governor of this workhouse that the governor of St. Lawrence’s workhouse had declared that the paupers in that house were better taken care of than the paupers in any other parish in the town. “But we, Sir,” said the governor of St. Giles’s workhouse, “give ours one hot-meat dinner a week more than they do in St. Lawrence parish.” “And what quantity do you give them at each meal?—We have never any stint.”—On such an examination as I was able to give of the accounts of commodities supplied to the workhouse, I was satisfied that this was the case. The beverage of the paupers was table-beer and ale. Four hogs-heads of beer, and about 36 gallons of ale, were brewed in the workhouse from 10 bushels of malt. They had two generations of paupers on the parish. When people were once on the parish, and in the workhouse, it was remarked they never got them off except by death. When the girls who were old enough were got out to service, they frequently went back to the workhouse complaining that they were badly treated,—meaning that they had not been so well treated as in the workhouse. These girls, when they returned, were in consequence made to wear a linsey-woolsey gown, and a close cap, which prevented their hair being seen. This, it was imagined, would operate to deter them from throwing themselves so readily out of their places. Their conduct was too frequently wanton and improper. The able-bodied paupers, who were mostly out-paupers, were idle and dissolute, and the parish officers could never manage with pauper labour. The farmers of that parish got work from “foreigners,” as they could not rely on pauper labour.

No stint.

When people once on
the parish, remarked
that they are never
got off except by
death.Farmers got work
from ‘foreigners,’ not
being able to rely on
pauper labour.

The house, though not so airy as the workhouse of St. Lawrence parish, seemed to be regulated much in the same manner. The children were very hale and clean. There appeared to be the proper separation by night, but by day the society in the court-yard was indiscriminate. In the course of my examination of the place, the governor more than once volunteered a repetition of his statement, that they gave one hot dinner a-week more than in St. Lawrence parish.

The allowances of money to the out-poor did not appear to be so considerable. There was, he told me, a vast deal of charity in the parish, of which the out-door paupers partook; fuel, and food, and clothes, were given away in great quantities. The pawnshops, he said, were full of the clothes given away by benevolent people.

Pawnbrokers’ shops
full of the clothes
given away by the
benevolent.

All the labourers in that parish sent to the workhouse for caudle when their wives lay in, and 5s. each was given them on the occasion. Benevolent people also gave caudle; and a society, in which there were young as well as old ladies, provided the labourers’ wives with linen; a pair of sheets were given to the woman, and a set of baby linen was provided for the child. One-half of the linen was left with the woman for the use of the child, the other half was returned to the society.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

BERES.

Precautions against
exaggerations.

When I visited the workhouses at Reading, and several other workhouses, I was on the threshold of the inquiry; but I could not fail to observe that the notion which the masters of these establishments entertained of my mission was, that I came to see that the "paupers were well taken care of," or in other words, that their food was abundant, and that nothing was wanting to their comfort. This prevalent notion might itself be adduced as an important piece of evidence; showing the prevalent opinion upon which administrators acted, that, without reference to the condition of the poorer rate-payers, or to the class of self-supporting or independent labourers, it was a duty to maintain in plenty, ease and comfort, and "to take care and do good to the poor;" or of those who, without labour or with less labour, subsisted on the fruits of the labour of others. I was on my guard against exaggerations by the witnesses of this class. I carefully examined the houses and the inmates, and the stores of provisions, and must state that to my mind the partial descriptions of the masters were justified by the evidence. I examined the parish books and the bills of the tradesmen, and found that the accounts of the supplies corresponded very closely with the evidence as to the consumption. I should state also, that I visited these places in every instance without notice, and under circumstances which could rarely afford opportunities for preparation. In one or two other instances than those I have mentioned, I found much filth and evidence of disorder, and I received very unfavourable reports of other places, which I had no means of visiting; but I have generally found that the profusion and waste has rather been increased than diminished with the neglect of the comforts of the paupers in the management. It was very evident, from the mixture of persons of discordant habits and feelings in the same house, from the impossibility of appropriate classification, that notwithstanding the profusion of the supplies for the physical wants, these places must be miserable abodes for all those who had lived independently in any family circle, or whose feelings or habits were not deteriorated by habits of associating in vicious communities.

I have repeatedly sent to the overseers of St. Lawrence, Reading, for a copy of their accounts, but the requisition has not yet been complied with. After some delay, I obtained the following copy of the accounts of the expenditure for the maintenance of *sixty-two* paupers during three months, in the workhouse of the parish of St. Giles, Reading.

AN ACCOUNT of PROVISIONS, CLOTHING, &c. used in St. Giles's Workhouse, from
1st of August to 31st of October 1832.

Of whom Purchased.	ARTICLES.	PRICE.	AMOUNT.
		s. d.	£. s. d.
Mr. Thomas Champion	8 sacks of flour - -	48 - per sack - -	19 4 -
	7 ditto - - -	40 - - -	14 - -
Mr. William Cotterell	88 lbs. <i>bacon</i> - - -	7½ per lb. - -	2 15 -
Mr. Webb - - -	114 - beef - - -	5 - - -	2 7 6
	92 - beef - - -	6 - - -	2 6 -
Mr. Ferris - - -	2 tons of coal - - -	26 - per ton - -	2 12 -
Mr. William Champion	81½ lbs. <i>bacon</i> - - -	6½ per lb. - -	2 2 5
	2 cwt. 3 qrs. 20 lbs. <i>cheese</i> - -	50 - per cwt. - -	7 6 6
	13½ lbs. <i>lard</i> - - -	7½ per lb. - -	- 8 3
	56 - soap - - -	64 - per cwt. - -	1 12 -
	1 - <i>mustard</i> - - -	1 6 per lb. - -	- 1 6
	56 - sugar - - -	6 - - -	1 8 -
	4 - <i>tea</i> - - -	5 6 - - -	1 2 -
	1 - <i>ginger</i> - - -	1 6 - - -	- 1 6
	5 - <i>starch</i> - - -	11 - - -	- 4 7
	1 bushel of salt - - -	1 9 - - -	- 1 9
	2 cwt. 26½ lbs. <i>cheese</i> - -	46 - per cwt. - -	5 2 11
Mr. Wren - - -	204 lbs. <i>beef</i> - - -	5 per lb. - -	4 5 -
	211 - <i>beef</i> - - -	5 - - -	4 7 11
Mr. Steward - - -	314 - <i>bacon</i> - - -	7½ - - -	9 9 9
	2 bushels of salt - - -	1 9 per bushel - -	- 3 6
	3 lbs. <i>arrow root</i> - - -	2 6 per lb. - -	- 7 6
	3 - <i>sago</i> - - -	1 - - -	- 3 -
	322 - <i>bacon</i> - - -	7½ - - -	10 1 3
	136 - <i>bacon</i> - - -	7½ - - -	4 5 -
Mrs. Slaughter - -	1 sack of beans - - -	23 - per sack - -	1 3 -
Messrs. Philbrick -	Leather - - -	- - -	5 14 -
Mr. John Smith - -	1 bushel of oatmeal - -	15 - per bushel - -	- 15 -
	4 lbs. <i>tea</i> - - -	5 - per lb. - -	1 - -
	1 - <i>tea</i> - - -	6 - - -	- 6 -
	2 - <i>coffee</i> - - -	2 4 - - -	- 4 8
	1 - <i>pepper</i> - - -	2 6 - - -	- 2 6
	1 - <i>allspice</i> - - -	2 6 - - -	- 2 6
	56 - sugar - - -	6 - - -	1 8 -
	40½ - butter - - -	10½ - - -	1 15 5
	6 dozen candles - - -	6 3 per doz. - -	1 17 6
	1 lb. <i>blue</i> - - -	2 - per lb. - -	- 2 -
	2 cwt. 1 qr. 3 lbs. <i>cheese</i> - -	59 - per cwt. - -	6 19 7
	73½ lbs. <i>bacon</i> - - -	7 per lb. - -	2 2 10
	83 - <i>bacon</i> - - -	7 - - -	2 8 5

Of whom Purchased.	ARTICLES.	PRICE.	AMOUNT.
		s. d.	£. s. d.
Mr. Henry Johnson -	142 - beef - - -	- 6 per lb. - -	3 11 -
	63 - beef - - -	- 5½ - - -	1 8 10
Messrs. Willats & Bland	54 gallons of beer - -	- 6 per gall. - -	1 7 -
	1 barrel - ditto - -	18 - per barrel - -	- 18 -
	2 barrels - ditto - -	18 - - - -	1 16 -
Mr. John Champion -	6 sacks of flour - -	44 - per sack - -	13 4 -
	2 ditto - - -	44 - - - -	4 8 -
	1 bushel of bread - -	11 4 per bushel - -	- 11 4
Mr. Bannister - -	235 lbs. beef - - -	- 5 per lb. - -	4 17 11
	174 ditto - - -	- 5 - - -	3 12 6
Mr. Ayres - -	2 tons of coal - -	26 - per ton - -	2 12 -
Mr. W. Truss - -	1 bushel of bread - -	10 8 per bushel - -	- 10 8
	67½ lbs. of <i>bacon</i> - -	- 7 per lb. - -	1 19 4
Mr. Pratt - -	Coffin - - -	- - - -	- 16 -
Messrs. Letchworth -	Clothes - - -	- - - -	6 16 6
Mr. Durbridge - -	1 bushel of bread - -	10 8 per bushel - -	- 10 8
Mr. Robinson - -	10 bushels of malt - -	9 6 - - -	4 15 -
	10 lbs. hops - - -	1 8 per lb. - -	- 16 8
Mr. Holly - -	2 tons of coal - -	27 - per ton - -	2 14 1
		£.	179 5 8

Note.—The articles marked in *italics* would under a strict diet for the able-bodied be deemed superfluities. If beef is consumed by able-bodied town paupers, bacon cannot be necessary.

The following is the governor's list of the paupers by whom the provisions described in the preceding account were consumed:—

PAUPERS in the Workhouse, from 1st August to 31st October 1832.

15 MEN:—

Names.	Age.
Abbott, Thomas - - -	69
Bateman, Thomas - - -	79
Hawkins, Thomas - - -	63
Lloyd, George - - -	69
Lovell, William - - -	69
Parker, James - - -	73
Pitman, Thomas - - -	69
Pocock, Austin - - -	61
Plumridge, Joseph - - -	43
Prior, James - - -	22
Spraggs, Joseph - - -	34
Stevens, Samuel - - -	71
Ware, William - - -	19
Weddel, William - - -	63
West, Daniel - - -	43
Wellman, Francis - - -	76

9 BOYS:—

Applegath, Richard - - -	9
Applegath, Thomas - - -	8
Brookes, James - - -	10
Baskerville, Thomas - - -	9
Harris, James - - -	15
Parr, Robert - - -	20
Scofield, James - - -	15
Sweetsur, John - - -	13
Ware, Charles - - -	11

19 WOMEN:—

Names.	Age.
Boult, Margaret - - -	32
Bawtree, Sarah - - -	23
Clack, Amelia - - -	66
Bowsher, Hannah - - -	21
Dell, Sarah - - -	50
Dyer, Hannah - - -	68
Goddard - - -	76
Goddard, Sarah - - -	36
Green, Sarah - - -	52
Hudson, Mary - - -	73
Higgs, Jane - - -	23
Knight, Catherine - - -	52
Mitchell, Mary - - -	40
Washbourn, Mary - - -	58
Wicks, Elizabeth - - -	52
Walters, Jane - - -	45
Wren, Elizabeth - - -	28
Perry, Frances - - -	58
Perry, Sarah - - -	52

18 GIRLS:—

Aldridge, Eliza - - -	19
Applegath, Charlotte - - -	10
Billinger, Mary - - -	15
Dell, Eliza - - -	9
Harris, Ann - - -	13
Messenger, Ann - - -	19
Pile, Esther - - -	11
Penny, Caroline - - -	10
Penny, Sophia - - -	8
Penny, Eliza - - -	6
Patey, Elizabeth - - -	5
Porter, Elizabeth - - -	9
Sweetsur, Elizabeth - - -	11
Sweetsur, Mary - - -	9
Spraggs, Rose - - -	6
Ware, Mary - - -	18
Ware, Caroline - - -	10
Webb, Mary - - -	12

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

BERKS.

It appears by the governor's return, that the weekly consumption of these paupers, the majority of whom are old men, old females and young children, is upwards of three pounds of meat, including a large proportion of bacon, one pound of which, as food, is usually considered to be equal to one pound and a quarter of meat. I have compared the diet of the paupers in this small parish with that of the paupers in one of the large metropolitan parishes (Lambeth), where the allowance of food is deemed mischievously profuse. In Lambeth workhouse the allowance of food is, to the adults, seven ounces of meat (clear of bone when cooked) three days each week. The quantity consumed by the same number of paupers as those in St. Giles's workhouse, Reading, would, according to the Lambeth diet table, be in three months - - - - - 1,274 lbs.

The quantity actually consumed by the paupers at Reading (allowing a loss of nearly one-third in cooking and for bone) is, during the same period - 2,399 lbs. showing a waste or over-supply of 1,125 lbs. during the thirteen weeks, which, during the year, makes a loss of 4,500 lbs. unnecessarily consumed by 62 paupers.

Workhouse supplied
by different
tradesmen.

It may have been observed, that in the foregoing account there are four different tradesmen, Messrs. Webb, Wren, Johnson, and Bannister, who supply "beef," and four different tradesmen, Cotterell, Champion, Steward, and Smith, who supply "bacon," for the consumption of the paupers in the workhouse. A similar practice prevails in most of the provincial parishes which I visited. The governor of St. Lawrence's workhouse assigned the prevalent reason for this distribution of the custom for the supply of the commodities, *i. e.* to give such tradesmen a "fair advantage," and to prevent complaints. In some places each tradesman in the parish supplies the goods in his turn. Thus butcher A. supplies the meat this week, and B. the next week, and so on, until all the butchers of the parish have had their turn. In nearly every instance I found the commodities supplied unexceptionable, or superior in quality, and the prices what are called "fair:" that is to say, they never exceeded the retail price in the market, and were often somewhat below it.

Parochial contracts
in small parishes and
small country towns
only formal.

I could not readily ascertain the local market prices of the various commodities consumed in the workhouses I visited: but I have very little doubt that it may be stated generally of the workhouses throughout the country, in all the smaller parishes, that, were the quantities of goods to be allowed to continue as at present, an enactment, providing that all goods for the workhouse should be supplied by contract, would save from 15 to 20 per cent. (or what ever may be the difference between the retail and the wholesale prices of commodities) of the present expense of maintaining the in-door paupers.

In some instances the parish officers stated, that the supply of goods was by contract; but I generally found that, from the neglect of proper publication, the contract was a mere form, as the supplies were usually taken from tradesmen resident in the parish. In one parish, where the supply of bread for the parish was put out to contract, I found that the contract was held jointly by two bakers, who, being the only bakers in the parish, had agreed to divide the supply and settle the prices between them.

Why shopkeepers in
favour of open ves-
tries.

The examination of this system develops a strong under-current in favour of profuse management and open vestries. A very intelligent officer of a large parish in Berkshire, where this system was in operation, stated to me in his evidence,—

"If the legislature provides that the supply of goods for the use of the poor in the workhouse shall be by contract, we shall have a select vestry (meaning an *elective* vestry); and if we have a select vestry, we shall have some reduction of the profusion and mismanagement, and a proportionate check to the increase of pauperism. On the present system, the smaller shopkeepers, who have always under their influence a number of the poorer rate-payers, and those of their own class, can get up a majority to carry any thing in the open vestry, and prevent any efficient reform."

Mischievous appli-
cation of the term
"select vestries," to
representative ves-
tries as well as to self-
elected vestries.

Very great mischief appears to have been created by the ambiguity of the term 'Select Vestry.' Where complaints have been made to me of the profusion prevalent in parishes under the government of open vestries, and I have asked of the witnesses whether no attempt has been made to obtain a select vestry,—the reply has usually been, that they would by no means resort to a form of government so much worse. I found that they understood the term *select vestry* to mean not an *elective* vestry, but a *self-elected* vestry, of the character of those which have been covered with so much opprobrium in the metropolis. When the same witnesses have been asked, whether they thought any improvement in the administration of their funds would be effected by confiding it to a board elected by the whole of the rate-payers, they have usually stated that that was the very form of management which they thought desirable to control the expenditure of the money. In nearly every instance of the government of parishes by open vestry, I found that practically the government was in the hands of a small body of parishioners; the numbers attending the vestry being usually a very small minority compared with the entire body of rate-payers; so that the management was, in these so called open vestries, by a select body, often of the worst description, namely, of those directly or indirectly interested in profuse expenditure. In one instance, where a parish is under the control of an open vestry, or a minority of the smaller rate-payers, it was admitted that the object of the "clamour and blackguardism" which prevailed at the public meetings was to drive away the larger rate-payers.

Government of
parishes by open
vestries is a
government by
minorities often
interested in
mismanagement.Government by
boards though not so
bad as by open ves-
tries liable to great
abuse.

But though a crowd or a fluctuating body, *i. e.* an open vestry, is utterly unfitted for detailed management, and though a representative committee or board may be the better instrument for economical management, these bodies are almost equally apt to degenerate into compact combinations of numbers of tradesmen, bound together by mutual local interests. Here and there a few persevering individuals thwart these interests, which can only be withstood by constant exertion and public attention, and by exterior securities.

Mr.

Mr. Richmond, one of the guardians of the poor in St. Luke's parish, Middlesex, stated, that "in compliance with our local Act, some of the articles of consumption in the parish are advertised for in the public papers to be supplied by contract or tender. But there was no such provision for nearly two-thirds of the commodities supplied. When I came into office it was a recognised principle, that the purchase of these commodities should be confined to the tradesmen of the parish. The effects of the patronage incident to purchases of goods, to the amount of upwards of twenty thousand per annum, from shopkeepers within the parish, (patronage exercised by a board, who are themselves tradesmen or shopkeepers, or connected with shopkeepers,) may well be conceived. For several years I have contended, but unsuccessfully, for the universal application of the principle, that contracts should be taken from those who made the lowest tenders, wherever they resided, provided they gave the requisite securities for the due performance of the contract. On investigating the purchases of goods within the parish, I found that some of the charges were upwards of 40 per cent. above the market prices. Whatever opposition may be made against an extensive or efficient reform, or generalization of the management of the funds for the relief of the poor, will be based on the retention of the parochial patronage and power. Although such a motive will never be ostensibly avowed, I have no doubt they will even assume that extended management will be more profuse than their own."

Latent ground of opposition to parochial reform.

EASTBOURNE, SUSSEX.

IN consequence of a suggestion from the Board that it would be desirable to ascertain what had been the progress of the system of administering the poor laws at Eastbourne, in Sussex, since it had been examined by Mr. Majendie, I took an opportunity of shortly re-examining the districts in the middle of September.

Although I found much reluctance on the part of some of the principal parishioners to give evidence, I met with several persons conversant with the poor law administration of the districts, who all agreed that it had gone on in the same state as that in which it was found by Mr. Majendie (see his Report, App. A. part I. p. 187); that notwithstanding the ruinous consequences of the system, which were every day becoming more apparent, no efforts were now made to check it. During the last winter an attempt was made to alter the allowance system; but a mob of the out-door paupers assembled, and the attempt was abandoned. One of the parish-officers stated to me, that they now considered that they were completely under "mob law," and that the paupers enforced what allowance they pleased. There was no chance whatever that the parish would be rescued by any exertions of the parishioners; the only hope was of some external aid from legislative enactments.

In illustration of the deterioration of the labourers by the bounties on indolence and improvidence afforded by the mal-administration of the poor laws, Mr. Majendie states, in his Report, that in consequence of the fishermen being secure of pay without labour, they had refused to go out to sea during the winter, and that it became necessary to send to Hastings for the hands requisite to man the fishing-boats, and that as an inducement to these hands, such wages were given them as to deprive the masters of their fair profit. I examined one of the master-fishermen (Mr. T. Hyde), who stated to me, that the deterioration of the fishermen had been progressive, and that one fishing-boat had been given up since the last year, or that it would have been necessary to send for more "foreigners," and to offer them still higher wages, as inducements to go to sea. These wages were so high as to deprive him of his fair profits as a master. In the adjacent parishes there was an abundance of young men, but they were worthless, indolent and unwilling to work hard as he did, for their living from the sea, whilst an easy living was to be had from the parish.

Progress of pauper habits amongst the fishermen.

Other instances, such as the following, were adduced to me. "I offered," said Mrs. Davies Gilbert, "2s. a day (the regular wages) for labour, to a man named John Carter. He said to me, I will do it, madam, if you require it, but I have 14s. 8d. per week from the parish for standing still, with my family, and I do not see why I should do the work. He had received 42l. 12s. 8d. as his allowance from the parish for the year ending Lady-day 1832."

In other cases labour was not performed, it being known that labourers could not be got for such wages as would render the execution of the work eligible.

The rates were beginning to bear down the smaller shopkeepers: a linen-draper, a miller, and a butcher, who were rate-payers, had been ruined, and had recently become paupers.

Mr. Davies Gilbert, who is the lord of the manor, takes little or no part in parochial affairs, and leaves all business in relation to them to Mrs. Gilbert. That lady exerted her influence with their tenantry and other parishioners to have adequate labour provided for the able-bodied, and pointed out a source of labour which was suggested by the Archbishop of Dublin, in a note which she printed, and of which the following is a copy:—

"I think it as well now I am writing, to leave a memorandum of the experiment I mentioned, in case you should like to try it.

"I pared off the turf from a part of a rich meadow, dug up a spit deep of the soil and laid it in a heap, then dug out the sub-soil for about four feet more, which I carried to a barren hill, bringing from thence back-carriage, the sand from the hill (as you would the shingle) with which I filled up the hole, then laid the top soil over and replaced the turf. The meadow was of course rather the better

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

SUSSEX.

Refusal by farmers to cultivate by pauper labourers, lest the produce of their labour might affect the markets.

Refusal by farmers to agree to measures for the employment of the stock of hands maintained by the parish.

better for draining, and the hill greatly enriched. In this way a rood of marsh land would supply soil perhaps to cover two acres of beach, and the marsh would be benefited. Whether this would answer must of course depend on the price of labour, but it is worth remembering, when work is scarce, as the whole expense is labour."

At Eastbourne there appears to be great convenience for such an experiment, by covering the shingle with soil from the adjacent marsh. Mrs. Gilbert stated to me that as no one of the vestry appeared to be willing to supply marsh land, she

"Purchased six acres and offered it at a pepper-corn a rod to the vestry, provided the work was done by the 174 able-bodied paupers by measure; but this was refused, saying there was land enough already in cultivation, and truly at that very time, the gate of an adjoining marsh was bound to the post with iron, showing it was not intended to be used that winter.

"On the following 20th of March 1832, in writing, I offered to pay the vestry 5s. a rod for all the work the paupers could do during the remaining four and a-half days of that week; this too was rejected, saying they had few hands remaining. This few proved to be 54, and at the rate that 21 taken indiscriminately worked on the 24th, I might have had to pay the parish 60l., which is more than all the paupers earned in all the year beside.

"One pauper offered if the vestry would allow him, to continue covering the shingle with soil for twelve months instead of remaining useless on the roads, that he would hire the shingle of them at 20s. an acre, and cease to be chargeable with his wife and children at the end of that time, and I guaranteed that he should not be chargeable for the first year. But this offer was refused by the vestry, saying, 'If we let that man off, others will wish to maintain themselves, and then where shall we get workmen?'"

She determined, however, that the experiment should be tried. The following is the account I received of the cost:--

March 1832:	Rods.	£.	s.	d.		Rods.	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Day labourers, with wooden baskets, moved the clay and shingle. They were provided with tools, and lost four - - -	4	4	-	-	Shingle covered with clay, at 2s. a rod.					Cost of fencing 336 ft. of flint wall, 5 ft. high - - -	20	4	-
23. Wood, a brick-maker - - -	1	-	5	6	Finding their own tools and hand or horse carts, except for a small quantity a barrow - -	99 ½	9	19	-	2 cart-gates, which also act as turnstiles, and one only foot-gate - - -	6	-	-
24. 21 paupers, ¾ of a rod in ¾ of a day - - - -	15	2	14	6	Ditto, by cubic measure believed to be 2s. a rod - - -	40	4	2	-	346 ½ ft. of strong five-bar iron hurdles, weighing 41 lbs. each, at 14d. a foot - - - -	20	4	-
26. 6 ditto, at 2s. a day, and 2s. a rod	6	1	4	-	TOTAL - - -	140 ½	14	1	-	Ditch and bank, 8 rods, 132 ft. - -	1	8	-
53 loads of 20 bushels of loam, and carriage, spread on 22 rods - - - -	-	5	6	-	Covered with soil from the marsh ditch, at 1s. p' rod	20	1	-	-	If the fourth side also bank - - -	1	8	-
Ditto, very bad	-	-	4	3	TOTAL - - -	160 ½	15	1	-	TOTAL - £.	50	4	-
TOTAL - - -	22	9	14	3	What was spread beyond the acre has been used to make the bank.					346 One Acre.			131
Thus 22 rods received 48 bush. a rod, on which was grown so abundant a crop of potatoes, some weighing from 16 to 20 oz.; afterwards at 2s. 6d. a rod - - - -	13 ½	1	16	6	What the produce of mere clay is, remains to be proved; but some of first 10 little tenants have hired clay only at 3s. a rod, that is, at the rate of 40s. an acre.					The cost of the fence would diminish as the quantity inclosed increased.			
	35 ½	11	10	-									

This is correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief, who have paid part, and measured, and saw the receipts of the rest.

John Starr,

Bailiff upwards of 21 years to Mr. Gilbert's family at Eastbourne, and a Freeholder.

Witness,

James Hodson, } this 25th July 1833, engaged in valuing
Robert Wood, } the parish of Eastbourne.
of Lindfield,

I am

I am not competent from my knowledge of agriculture to judge of any agricultural experiment, but I visited the spot to inspect it, and was accompanied by Mr. Mann, one of the farmers living in the neighbourhood. The greater part of the ground was planted with potatoes, some of which were taken up to show me. They certainly "ran small," but Mr. Mann admitted, that as the weather had been unusually dry and unfavourable, none of the potatoes planted in that neighbourhood had turned out well, and under the circumstances these potatoes were of a fair quality. A report was prevalent in the neighbourhood, that Mrs. Gilbert had been imposed upon as to the size of the potatoes believed to have grown there during the former season, and it was believed that to gratify her, potatoes taken out of better ground had been substituted for those really grown in the new ground. The people who produced the roots in question, protested to me that the story was a falsehood. They stated that the potatoes were of a peculiar quality, and were peculiarly suited to such a soil. Whether or not the experiment was conducted as well as it might have been, I could not say, but it appeared to me that the soil was poor. It was admitted that it might be made useful. Mr. Mann thought it would serve for sheep pasture.

I inquired as closely as I could of those connected with the parish who consented to be examined, why the farmers had opposed the adoption of this mode of employing the labour of the able-bodied paupers, by whom the parish was so heavily burdened. The chief objection put forth by some of them was, that the experiment "would not pay." I stated that I considered that this answer was unsatisfactory, inasmuch they could scarcely be unaware that labour which might be unprofitable to individuals might be profitable to a parish, and it had not been shown that it would not be profitable in stemming the influx of pauperism. In another parish it was found profitable to keep the paupers employed in grinding corn by a hand-mill, although the labour cost more than the value of the corn ground: immediately that the mill was stopped there was an influx of new applications. Moreover, they must be aware of the importance of obtaining labour which had at least the semblance of being useful, and of the mischiefs occasioned by employing men in dragging the hand-carts, which they considered degrading. They then generally stated that "they did not see why they should make land for others," but this answer I also rejected as unsatisfactory, inasmuch as they would have had the land in question for a corn rent for twenty years. The end of this inquiry for the latent reasons of the farmers was, that although the system of administration had been carried farther than they intended, and although they would be glad to get rid of the domination of the labourers, yet they (the farmers) considered that the rates came chiefly out of the pockets of the landlords; that they would rather have high rates and low rents than high rents and low rates.

Mr. John Mann, of Eastbourne, Examined.

"How long have you been a parishioner of this parish?—I have lived in this parish 35 years, and I have been a member of the select vestry 14 years.

"Have you been a frequent attendant at the vestry?—I very seldom miss attending.

"How long have you farmed land in the parish?—About 20 years.

"Of whom do you hold your land?—The land which I farm is my own.

"Of what class are the majority of persons attending the vestry?—Chiefly the smaller farmers. A few tradesmen do attend occasionally.

"Do any of the landowners or of the gentry attend?—No. Now and then a steward will attend.

"Would the attendance of the proprietors be liked by the small farmers?—No; I am convinced that it would not be liked by the farmers.

"Are you, from your habits of intercourse with the farmers of this district, well acquainted with their sentiments?—Yes, I am.

"To what do you ascribe the fact, if fact it be, that the attempts to procure additional labour for the paupers in this parish, and to obtain a more efficient management and a considerable reduction of the poor's-rates, have been generally coldly received or thwarted, or openly opposed and defeated. Take time to consider your answer?—I know that the farmers would sooner have high rates and low rents, than high rents and low rates; that I believe is the general feeling. The farmers like that their men should be paid from the poor-book.

Farmers interest in abusive administration.

"If the farmers had the option of paying 75 per cent. in poor's-rates, and 25 per cent. in rent, or 75 per cent. in rent and 25 per cent. in poor's-rates, which do you believe they would prefer?—The low rents and the high rates, undoubtedly.

Would prefer the payment of high rates and low rents to low rates and high rents.

"Have you ever heard them state this sentiment openly?—Yes, openly in the vestry.

"Have you heard them declare this since 1830?—Yes, and before that time too.

"How low do you think the farmers would be willing to have the rates reduced?—I do not believe they would be willing or care much to have them reduced much more than they have been; the great farmers in particular I do not think want them reduced. Whilst the rates are as they are, they can always get what hands they want extra, and as soon as it rains they can turn them all on to the parish again; and besides that, they can make the shopkeepers, the lodging-house keepers, and other persons pay in proportion of the wages of the men they turn off. Sometimes they have taken men off the parish for half a day, and have made the parish pay for the other half of the day.

"Do the farmers consider that they have a permanent interest in the land?—No; there they have not; they hold mostly from year to year, and hardly consider themselves as more than birds of passage.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

SUSSEX.

"Do they not see, as a result of this system, the total pauperisation of the whole of the labouring population, and the total destruction of all property, unless some strong measures be taken to save it?—They feel no danger; as soon as they find that they are losing money, they can go. I have no doubt this is their feeling. Their whole course of conduct shows it, though they do not express as much."

Being further examined, he declared, that he had had no quarrel with the farmers in the vicinity, and stated what he had under a sense of duty to state the truth, in answer to the questions put to him.

I also interrogated at considerable length a farmer who was pointed out to me as a leading member of the vestry. He gave very unwilling and evasive answers, but on the whole they were confirmatory of the testimony of the last witness. He declared, however, that there were "some" who did not entertain such sentiments as those above stated; and that "many" of the farmers began to feel the rates extremely oppressive.

Mrs. Gilbert also stated, that she had herself been convinced by the conduct of some of her tenants, that they were fully persuaded that their interests were opposed to any considerable reduction of the rates; she had stated to them her impression, and they had in no instance denied its correctness. She had sent a letter to the county paper, in which she set forth what she considered to be the true state of the case, and not one answer was made to the charge. Payment and management of rates by tenants she had declared, could, under existing circumstances, no more be called correctly payment of "their own money," and "management of their own affairs," than could the payment of her tradesmen's bills by her butler be called a payment of his own money, and a management of his own affairs. The tenants were well aware that the rates were, in effect, paid out of rent, or out of their landlord's pockets. She mentioned an instance of the vigilance with which the farmers regarded the incidents affecting the markets of labour or produce, that a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who is a magistrate, and who was desirous of diminishing the rates by employing able-bodied labourers, employed several of the labourers in spade husbandry, and kept them at work during the winter; but the tenants who ruled the vestry, instead of being thankful to him, discouraged this proceeding, and in effect required him to ship off the produce, saying, "That if it was sold in this place, it would lower the price of theirs."

Tenants' interests in support of abusive administration.

In answer to some expressions of surprise that the landholders did not come forward to rescue their property from this malversation, she stated that they would not take the trouble. A gentleman who had reduced by one half, the rents of the land he had received in one parish, where the same system was in progress, had declared that he would give up the other half sooner than sustain the annoyance of a conflict with the vestry, or the annoyance of having to attend it. On the occasion of a new valuation when the assessments of the householders were raised, and those of the landholders lowered, the householders assembled. The tenants (who had before excluded even the magistrates and the proprietors of all classes by various modes of annoyance) now agreed that five householders should be present at all future vestries; but the tenants afterwards met and gave the householders to understand, that if they did attend the vestries, that they (the tenants) would not buy anything in the place, or use a mechanic belonging to it.

The Rev. Thos. Pitman, Vicar of Eastbourne, Examined.

"HAVE you had opportunities of becoming acquainted with the administration of the Poor Laws in your own parish in particular, and of the adjacent district in general?—I have been for five years vicar of this parish, and during that time have had ample opportunity of becoming acquainted with the administration of the Poor Laws here; with the adjacent district I am little acquainted, but from the little information I possess, I believe that the administration of the Poor Laws in the neighbouring parishes, is not dissimilar to the administration here.

"Have the *effects* of the poor's rates been progressive during the last year?—From my being personally unconnected with the administration of relief, I am not perhaps so well qualified to answer this as I should be if I were a regular attendant at the vestry; nevertheless it cannot well be otherwise than that a system which provides for idleness, and the increase of a pauper population by the promotion of early and improvident marriages, should make a rapid and a progressive march.

"What is the present condition of your own parish in relation to the administration of the Poor Laws, and what is the general condition of the adjacent parishes, in so far as the administration is similar?—The present condition of my parish is physically much influenced by the Poor Law administration; there are very few families which do not receive some relief; the immediate effect is, that the character of the labourer as a husbandman, is much deteriorated, since it becomes a matter of perfect indifference whether employment is found for him or not. There is little difference, if any, between the amount paid by the parish and the occupier of land. I believe as the same, or nearly the same system is observed in the adjacent parishes, the same, or nearly the same effects are visible.

"What do you find to be the effect of that administration on the morals of your flock?—A system which offers encouragement to habits of idleness, replenishes the coffers of the drunkard, the sabbath-breaker, the profane and the vicious, cannot well be other than a most powerful engine to the speedy corruption and demoralization of the people.

"If the mal-administration of the Poor Laws were removed, what reason have you for believing that the moral and physical condition of the labouring classes would be improved?—I have always been led to consider man in such a light, as to feel that he will always do that which appears most likely to tend to his own happiness; it is some such feeling as this, which in the present Poor Law administration is the labourer's ruin; a security of pay, and the same whether at work or not, and whether of reputation or not; and I cannot but think, if the present security were abolished and all made to depend on a man's physical and moral energy, even those who have by the system been depressed, would become more physical and more moral labourers.

"Does not the system produce discontent amongst the labouring classes?—The present system adopted here and in the neighbourhood must, at first excite in the mind of any good labourer who is driven to it, much disgust; for the work had recourse to by the parish is really more fit for donkeys than men; but it is to be feared that these impressions become weaker and weaker, till at last the company of the swearer and the drunkard overcomes all scruples, and soon obliterates all good feeling; I am satisfied that the men themselves are much discontented with the present system, and such of them as are not altogether ruined, would do any thing to be rid of it.

"Do you believe that the prevention of the mal-administration of the Poor Laws, would greatly benefit the labouring man?—This I conceive would mainly depend upon the issue of the laws proposed for prevention; if the end of the abolition should be the employment of the able-bodied in honesty and industry, I have no doubt of the benefit which would accrue, both in the man and in his morals; but to effect this, some means must be devised whereby a man may by his work support his family.

"What are the present effects of the Poor Laws on the value of landed property in your district?—Landed property is much depreciated in value by the operation of the Poor Laws; it cannot well be otherwise where the landlord gets but one rent instead of two, or rather one-half instead of the whole.

"What do you conceive will be the value of property in your parish five or ten years hence, if no efficient check be given to the present system of mal-administration?—I have never entertained but one opinion upon this subject; if the present system be permitted for five or ten years longer, property of every description must be greatly reduced in value. Indeed so rapid is the increase of pauperism under such nursing and protection, that I am almost led to question whether ten years may not be more than sufficient to transfer the pauper altogether to the present receivers of the relief it imparts.

"Have not facts come to your knowledge to establish the conclusion in your mind, that the farmers in this district conceive that they are interested in maintaining the system of paying poor's rates in aid of wages, and of maintaining a high nominal expenditure in the shape of poor's rate? It is requisite that some of these facts should be specified, and you are therefore requested to specify them?—I am decidedly of this opinion, and have been led to this conclusion by the conduct of the farmers themselves. They have been known in open vestry to declare as much, and have otherwise stated, that if they were to allow the paupers to become independent by hiring of land, they would be without labourers in harvest; evidently showing that they preferred the present system of support by poor rates to its abolishment.

*Farmers' conclusion
as to the payment of
rates by landlords.*

"The proprietors having tried to check the system and failed, is there any reason to believe that any one of them who has consumable property, will make or succeed in making more desperate efforts, when the burthen becomes heavier, or when the system has advanced and gained strength?—How far the mind of the proprietors may be influenced by the nearer approach of the confiscation of their property, I cannot say; but I should think the present state of things must be sufficient, either to arouse the proprietor to a sense of his danger, or to assure us that he believes that all efforts are vain, and the case beyond redress.

"Since the present law which would permit, (and it may be said requires) in your district the improved administration in force in other districts, has proved inefficient in your district; since the majority of the tenantry are proved to be unwilling to oppose the system, and since the proprietors have failed to arrest it, to what other agency do you look for accomplishing the change?—A reply to this question in its fullest extent would occupy much time, and require prolixity of answer; I have no hope void of the interference of government. If government take up the administration, we may be relieved, and the present laws, upon revision, may effect this; but as long as the system which is at present adopted here and in the neighbourhood is permitted to continue, (and we have no means void of the interference of government of having it discontinued) we have no hope to loose it, and no prospect but the destruction of our property, the corruption of our people, and the distress of all.

"What is the condition of any labouring men who may have remained independent, (if any such there be) as compared with those who have become paupers?—It is not a very difficult matter, even to calculate the amount of relief received by a man from the state of his cottage, so much of evil does relief from the parish bring with it; instances, however, are very few in my parish where relief is not received in some way or other, and to some extent. Those instances which have come to my knowledge, have clearly proved how much a man is injured by the present system of Poor Law administration.

"What is the condition of those labourers resident in your parish who belong to other parishes, as compared with the condition of your own pauperized labourers?—Where relief is obtained, the state of the labourer is not different; I am acquainted with one instance of a man with a large family, who does not receive relief; he supports his wife and children with real credit; is a man of excellent character, and one of whose presence in my parish I have just occasion to be proud."

Appendix (A.)

Opinions of Labourers as to the Administration of Poor's Rates by Farmers.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

SUSSEX.

I have always endeavoured to obtain, as clearly as possible, from the independent labourers themselves, their opinions and sentiments respecting the prevalent system of administering the poor laws, and its operation upon their interests. Here it appeared to be especially desirable to examine witnesses of this class; and, after some inquiry, I obtained an opportunity of examining two of them. One of them was a remarkably intelligent labourer of a very good moral character. He has a wife and six children, and receives from his parish 4s. 6d. per week in aid of wages. He begged that his name might not be made known, as the consequence might be, that the overseers would take offence at the truths he might tell, and, by depriving him wholly of his allowance, throw him wholly on the parish. The other was a labourer also of high moral character, who has a wife and five children, but had received no relief from the parish except once for a doctor, although it is common in his own as well as in the neighbouring parishes to receive an allowance for children. The first had offered to give up his claims on the parish for an allotment of two or three acres of land at a fair rent. Excepting that their imaginations appeared to have been unusually excited as to the advantages to be derived from allotments and hand labour, I believe they expressed the prevalent sentiments of such of the labourers in that part of the country as can be properly said to entertain any fixed sentiments or opinions on these subjects.

Examination of the first Labourer.

Farmers adverse to the emigration of surplus labourers, fearing that rates would be reduced and rents enhanced thereby.

"In the neighbouring parishes round us, several labourers were desirous of emigrating, but the parish officers were not willing to let them go. The parish officers are farmers, and the talk of the parishes about was, that if the poor went, the taxes would be lowered, and the landlords would rise their farms. Three however went from the parish of Westham, but not so many went as were desirous of going. A letter however has just been received from them in America, and they give capital accounts. I am sure many would go out if they could.

Discontents of the labourers.

Confined for work in their parishes.

"What are the chief discontents amongst the agricultural labourers of the parishes which you know?—In the first place, they cannot get enough work, either in their own parishes or out of them. If a labourer goes into another parish, they say to him, "You are not one of our parish, and we cannot employ you." They then give him an allowance, which is not enough for him, and he runs about discontented, and gets into some mischief. I need not say that all these stacks are well known to have been set on fire by the surplus labourers.

"You say that they were set on fire by surplus labourers, is that word, 'surplus labourer,' in use amongst the labourers?—Yes, it is.

"How long do you remember the word having been used amongst them?—These three or four years.

"How did they get the word?—The overseers first used it.

Notions of the labourers on surplus population.

"Have the labourers any clear notion of how many more there are in the parishes more than are wanted; do they ever say, for instance, that there are ten or twenty men in our parish more than will ever find work there?—Yes, they frequently say that.

Believe that the land is imperfectly cultivated.

"Do they every discuss or talk about what is the effect of having so many unemployed on the wages of those who are employed?—They think the land is not half cultivated; they often say, 'There's no use in going to America, there's America enough at home if the farmers would but let them cultivate the land.' I am quite sure there is work enough in the parishes all about if the large farmers would employ the labourers in the same way as the small farmers do. The little farmers are giving at this time 40s. an acre, where the large farmers, by joining lands, do not give more than 15s. or a 1l.

See the increase of population.

"Is it ever considered by the labourers how many more there would be in a parish when all their families are grown up and capable of working?—Yes, they see that their number is increasing very much; they see that when their children are playing before their doors in the evening, and often talk about it.

Some look to emigration, others to an increased cultivation of the lands.

"What do they say ought to be done with them all when they grow up; how do they expect them all to live when there are more than can be found work for in the parish; what is the usual talk about it?—Some say that they are getting too thick, and would like to go abroad; others say, there is America enough at home, and that they can live if they could have a bit of land.

Dislike of unproductive labour.

"You were saying that one of the present discontents arose from their not having such work as they wanted; do you mean parish work?—No; what they want is regular husbandry work at fair wages; they do not like the parish work, which is one great cause of their discontent. In Hailsham parish last winter, the men who are made to drag the parish carts got four of the horses' hoops of bells placed on their heads, and dragged the parish cart from Eastbourne to Hailsham market; when they were in the market one of them went with his hat to beg, and they got a good many shillings from people out of the parish. Their own farmers would not give them any thing, but looked another way; they could not bear to see it, they were ashamed of it.

Pray for the cheap loaf.

"What other cause of discontent do the labourers set forth at this time?—I do not recollect, except that they pray for the cheap loaf in every parish, and so does the tradesman as bad as the poor people.

"Have

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"Have they any discussion about the poor laws?—Yes, they have; they are getting very impatient about it. Their say is, that the Government won't do thing for the poor man or they would have done it before.

Getting very impatient about poor laws.

"Done what before?—Why, to have them all employed according to the number of acres of land. In our neighbourhood it has been a good deal talked of that there would be an Act passed to force the farmers to employ them on the lands at the usual prices the workmen are receiving now, which I am confident would give good satisfaction to all those that are now surplus.

Think that farmers ought to be forced to find work for them at fair wages.

"What do you mean by workmen?—We call they workmen who are at work on the land and not for the parish. They are surplus who work for the parish, who are driven about like dogs more than men by the overseers. I am sure that many would as lieve be transported as draw the hand cart. They can't bear it.

Distinction between workmen and paupers.

"What wages do the workmen get?—Two shillings a day in the winter, haying and harvest they get half-a-crown, and by the great they will get more.

"What alterations of the Poor Laws are talked about by the labourers?—They have hopes that Government will take it in hand, as they would then be contented with what was allotted to them; they would be sure that they would have what was right, and would not be driven about by the overseers.

Hope that government will take the poor laws in hand, as the law would then be administered impartially.

"Are you sure that the labourers would be pleased to see the overseers deprived of their power?—Yes, that they would, for they often fail, and take the parishes in; and besides, all parish business now goes by favour. Many people do now say that they talk about reform in the Government, but there wants reform in the parish.

All parish business now goes by favour.

"Suppose that the workmen were deprived of the allowance in aid of wages, but deprived in such numbers that the farmers would be compelled to pay full wages to the same amount, how do you think such a measure would be received by the workmen?—That would give a great deal more content, and I am sure that they would do the farmer more work. The parish money is now chucked to us like as to a dog.

Would work better for farmer's wages than for parish pay.

"What would be the effect of the establishment of a rule that all persons should either be wholly off or wholly on the parish books, so that in future there should be no half payment by the parish, and half payment by the farmer?—If that were done I am afraid that the farmers would pick the single men or the men with small families.

Apprehensive of single men being preferred, if the allowance system were discontinued.

"But are not the heads of families in general the most steady workmen?—Yes, they are.

Heads of families the most steady workmen.

"And do not the most steady and best workmen now in general get better wages?—No, they give them all the same wages here.

"Are not potatoes and such things given to the best workmen here?—Not here; I have heard such things in other countries.

Steady workmen have the most steady employment.

"What other countries do you mean?—Down in the shires; in Berkshire and the other shires.

"But do not the best workmen get the most steady employment here?—Yes, they do.

"If it were shown that such a rule as that of discontinuing the allowance system had been tried in other places such as the shires, as it has indeed been tried in Cookham parish in Berkshire, and a number of other parishes, and that the condition of all sorts of labourers, the married as well as the single, those who had large families as well as those who have small, have greatly benefited by what would seem at first a severe measure, that wages had risen, and employment become more regular, would there be any discontent then?—There would be no discontent then.

"Do you think that publications showing the beneficial effects of the changes in other places would prevent discontent?—Yes, I think they would.

"Would they be read?—The poor people would read them, I make no doubt.

"What do you think would be the effect of a change in which it would be determined that all should either live wholly upon their wages or wholly upon the parish, and that those who were wholly upon the parish should have the liberty of going to America, or be sent to some place where men of large families would be sure to be well employed?—I think a many would like to go to America.

Notions as to the change of system with the alternative of emigration.

"Would you, as a married man, with a family of six children, and being fearful that men with no families, or with smaller families, would gain the preference, prefer a change in which you might either remain here and take your chance on whole wages for your work, or get sent to America; would you vote for such a change?—I should vote for steady employment and full payment from the farmer, and I would rather go to America than go upon the parish.

Would prefer steady work here at fair wages, but would prefer emigration to pauperism.

"But would not such a plan, getting rid of the system of favouritism which you state is carried on by the overseers; getting rid of the hand cart, getting rid of the insolent and degrading treatment of labourers; who would be independent of all but their own useful labour, not be deemed an immense boon when fully understood by your fellow labourers?—Yes, I think it would; but there is no compulsion at present to the farmer to employ the right number of hands to cultivate his farm, which we think there ought to be. We think that that is the main thing of all that wants doing. It is as plain as day light.

Think the discontinuance of the allowance system might be deemed a boon, but still want to have the farmer compelled to find work.

"But let us understand: are not lands of very different qualities; land in one parish requiring a very different sort of culture, and a different amount of men's labour to cultivate it?—Yes, that is true.

"Do not opinions of the very best workmen differ as to the way in which land ought to be cultivated?—Yes, they differ in this way; they say the farmer does not ditch it nor grip it, nor trunk it, nor mend enough, and that makes labour scarcer.

Notions as to the
return for agricul-
tural labour.

"But must not the farmer in all these things be determined as to what he shall do by the profit or the money he will get?—Yes, but they have more land than they can cultivate properly.

"Do you mean to say by cultivating properly, cultivate to a profit; for why should he do all the things which take trouble unless he be paid for that trouble?—It is quite evident that all cultivation of land pays more for doing the higher it is.

"If this be so evident, why do not others take the land out of the farmer's hands; why do not the labourers unite, and endeavour to obtain credit, lease a farm, and make that profit which the farmers stupidly prevents him making. Surely some land owners will be found to give credit to what is so self-evident?—The labourers cannot get the land to do it, or else they would do it very soon. They would soon show the difference.

"But you have stated that opinions as to the quantity of labour which might be employed on land differs?—Yes, sir.

"And differs in every parish?—Yes, sir.

"And differs amongst different people in the same parish?—Yes, sir.

"Then how is the Government to be expected to set to work and determine the exact amount of the labour which shall be employed on every field in every parish, in every county throughout Great Britain, as the labourers in these parts, according to your accounts, seem to expect?—They have expected this.

"But do you not see, that as no two people's opinions agree as to the quantity of labour which ought to be employed to any farm, so no two people would be satisfied with any possible measure of the kind which Government might propose?—If Government were to pass a measure that all the hands should be employed, it would give satisfaction.

"No doubt; but have the labourers ever considered how such a measure should be carried into effect?—No, they have not, but that is what they would all like.

"Do not the paupers generally get more than the independent workmen?—I cannot say what they get in other parishes, but they do not in ours."

He had stated that his weekly wages were 16s. 6d., namely, 12s. from the farmer, and 4s. 6d. from the parish. Being asked to put down carefully, one by one, all the commodities which his family consumed or purchased weekly, he made out the following list:—

Self, wife and six children, earn 12s. Received from the parish, 4s. 6d.

	s.	d.
Flour, six gallons - - - - -	6	6
Sugar, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. - - - - -	-	11
Bacon, 6 lb. - - - - -	3	-
Cheese, 3 lb. - - - - -	1	6
Soap, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., Candles, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. - - - - -	-	8
Coals, a bushel and a half - - - - -	1	7
Faggot to bake - - - - -	-	6
Rent - - - - -	1	8
Tea, 2 ounces - - - - -	-	9

Being asked to sum up this, he was surprised into the proof that his weekly expenditure was 17s. 1d., or more than his weekly income, and clothes and contingent expenses were unaccounted for. He stated, that he got a little from a cow he kept, but it was evident he got more. However, I forebore to examine him further on that point, and in answer to my question as to whether the money now received by him as weekly wages would not command more of commodities, and consequently whether he as a workman was not better off than at any former period which he remembered, he very frankly declared, that for his part he was very well satisfied, though he had no objection to get more; only the surplus labourers and others of his class were very badly off, and ought to have something done for them.

Thomas Pearce, Labourer in Husbandry, of the Parish of Govington, Sussex;
Examined.

WITNESS has worked all his life for Mr. Noakes, of Wannoch.

[At first the witness, who appeared to be a stout hard-working young man, was examined as to the diet and usual mode of living of the labourers of that district. His evidence was confirmatory of that which is elsewhere stated, as to the modes of living of the labouring classes, and as to the superiority of the condition of paupers. He stated, that he thought beer necessary for a labouring man, for hard work especially; and when questioned as to the strength of beer which was found the best to work upon, he stated that he and others (who worked piece work) found that strong beer (or beer which excited them) was not so good for them, and that the beer such as his wife brewed for him, ten or twelve gallons from half a bushel of malt was as good beer as he could wish for his work; good beer enough for any working man. In several workhouses where I inquired into the subject, I found that, for the paupers, only a dozen gallons of beer were brewed from one bushel of malt.]

"In your parish are there many able-bodied men upon the parish?—There are a great many men in our parish who like it better than being at work.

Parish work, and the
work of independent
labourers.

"Why do they like it better?—They get the same money, and don't do half so much work. They don't work like me. They be'ant at it so many hours, and they don't do so much work when they be at it. They're doing no good, and are only waiting for dinner-time and night. They be'ant working, it's only waiting.

"How have you managed to live without parish relief?—By working hard.

"What

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SUSSEX.

"What do the paupers say to you?—They blame me for what I do. They say to me, 'What are you working for?' I say, 'For myself.' They say, 'You are only doing it to save the parish, and if you didn't do it, you would get the same as another man has, and would get the money for smoking your pipe and doing nothing.' 'Tis a hard thing for a man like me to be jeered at so.

"If you want anything from the parish, should you get it sooner than a man who has not worked so hard?—No, not a bit; nor so likely as one of those men.

"What would they say to you?—They would say that I didn't want it, and that I had a piece of ground, and was well off. They're always giving to men who don't deserve it, whilst they are refusing to those who do.

"Is that complained of?—Yes, they be always complaining about it every day.

"Is it worse in your parish than in others?—No, it is the same in them all. There is partiality everywhere. If I was to offend my master, and he was to turn me away, none of the others would give me work; and if I go to the parish, they would put me on the roads. There's not one in our place that looks on me the better for my work, but all the worse for it.

"What would be thought of a plan, of making all go either wholly on or wholly off the parish, so that the men should not be paid half in wages and half as a pauper?—I do not know; but my master, Mr. Noakes, says, that he would take his full part of men, and if all the others did the same there would be no men on the road, except an old man or two just to let the water off. But some of the farmers like to poke the men on the roads, so as to make the blacksmith and the wheeler and the shopkeepers come in, which helps the rates.

"But do not the workmen see that the farmers do this to serve their own turn, and pay less in wages?—Yes, that is how it is. A farmer, when he wants his stock in, will say, 'I want to keep my cattle going: I won't take away my cattle-men, but I'll get some extra men from the roads.' And so he does; and when he has got his stock in, he says, 'Now you may go, and the parish may keep you.' He will get these men to do an extra day or two's work, but he won't give them more than the parish gives; for which reason they do not like to go, as they do not work half so hard for the parish.

"Would it, do you think, be a good thing to prevent the farmers using the parish to keep a stock of hands ready for these extra jobs?—I do not know how that would be, as I never seed it tried; but I think he would make the farmers keep more men for constant, which would be a good thing, as they would find more work for them. The land is not near done here as it should be, for want of hands."

The reasons of the farmers in the support of the allowance system.

In the course of some inquiries which I made during my stay in another part of the county, another description of evils were set forth, as arising from the administration of the funds for the relief of the poor by small farmers, who are usually closely connected with the parties relieved. The vestry clerk of Rotherfield, being questioned as to whether he had ever known paupers save money, answered in the affirmative; and stated that they had in that parish two instances, where paupers who had been allowed parish relief whilst at full work, had saved so much money and lent it out at interest to small farmers, that they (the paupers) had actually been enabled to take land and become small farmers themselves; and one of them had actually served the office of overseer and distributor of the rates in that same parish where he was formerly a pauper. I followed out this head of examination with the next parish officer, whom I examined.

Influence of the connection of small farmers with the claimants of relief.

Mr. Thomas Smith, Assistant Overseer of the parish of Buckstead, Sussex; Examined.

"ARE the small farmers in your district much connected with the paupers?—Sometimes they are very much connected.

"Are you aware that from the influence of that connexion, they are sometimes induced to grant relief?—Yes, they are sometimes.

"Have you ever known a pauper lend money to a farmer?—Yes, I have.

"Will you mention an instance?—A man named John Mitchell, who had been a pauper in Buckstead, was working for Dr. Doyley when he told the bailiff Winter, that he (Mitchell) had 50*l.* which he wanted to put out. Winter said, 'That that was his own case.' Winter was at that time living on his own property, and was a rate-payer. Mitchell was at that time receiving his allowance from the parish. Winter next day happened to see the overseer, and asked him, 'Whether the night before was the parish meeting?' 'Yes, it was,' said the overseer. Winter asked, 'Whether Mitchell had then applied for relief?' The overseer (Page) said he had. 'And did you give him anything?' said Mitchell. 'Yes, we gave him considerable,' said the overseer, 'for what could we do; he said his family were living on ground oats.' Winter never mentioned this until a long time afterwards to me, and we discontinued giving him relief, on the ground that he had the money, which he stoutly denied. He applied to the magistrates for relief, and they dismissed the case. One of the magistrates, however, recommended that he should be attended to, and that it should be seen what the facts of the case were. The man then applied to the parish, and the parish offered him the house, which he refused; but he still persevered, and the parish gave him 2*s.* a week, as they thought it would be cheaper than taking him in the house.

Instance of the use of a well-managed workhouse.

"Do you believe that had money been steadily refused to him, and the house alone offered, he would have come into the house?—I am quite sure he would not, as he had two sons in Lewes in good circumstances.

P. L. (A.)—III.

D

"Then

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Necessity of the
institution of a self-
acting test.Management by
small and large rate-
payers.Small farmers con-
nected with the
paupers.Diminution of per-
sonal influences by
administration in
larger districts.Effects of the esta-
blishment of a well-
regulated workhouse.Progress of pauper
habits.

"Then why was the parish induced to give him the relief?—I believe the truth to be that it was by the influence of an overseer named Gilbert.

"Who is this Gilbert?—A small farmer.

"Had he been connected with Mitchell?—Yes, I believe they are related; at all events they had been fellow workmen.

"Do you consider this an instance of the sort of influence exercised where the poor-rates are administered by small holders, who are more or less connected or acquainted with the parties receiving relief?—Yes, no doubt.

"Do you not, in rural parishes, know the circumstances of all the out-door paupers, so as to be able to prove clearly that an impostor is not in the situation of a pauper when he asserts that he is?—We have very great difficulty in doing that. We have frequent applications for relief from persons whom we believe to be in good circumstances, but we have no means of proving it, either before the vestry or before the bench, unless we happen to find out something in the way I have mentioned.

"Then, in fact, the great want of such parishes as yours, appears to be some system which will act as a test in all such cases; would a well regulated workhouse do this?—Yes, I think it would; and it is greatly wanted."

Mr. Thomas Attree, formerly Assistant Overseer of the Parish of Maresfield, Sussex, and connected with parochial business 30 years; Examined.

"HAVE you observed the difference of management between parishes managed by small farmers and by large ones?—Yes, I have.

"If there were one parish which consisted chiefly of small farms, and another of large ones, and if in each of the parishes the number of persons employed were equal, which of the parishes do you think would be the best managed for the prevention of pauperism?—I think the parishes where there were the largest farms.

"For what reason?—Chiefly from the circumstance that the smaller farmers are almost universally connected with the labourers by relationship, or in some way or other, so that the labourers have an influence over them, which they have not over the large farmers. The small farmer will not, for the sake of the parish, be strict with a relation, or a connexion, or a workman. Besides, a refusal from a person who is nearly an equal, excites more animosity than from a person who is more of a stranger, and has a greater authority.

"Do you intend to say that the larger farmers are exempt from such influences?—By no means; but it is considerably less.

"Would not the union of small parishes, or the extension of the districts for the management of paupers, be productive of the same effects as the management of larger holders, in the removal of the management from such private influences?—Yes, I think so. It would also let labour circulate more freely.

"What do you think would be the effect of the establishment of a well regulated district house; meaning by well regulated, one in which the condition of the paupers should not be better than that of the independent labourer. And that to this house should be applied a regulation that no relief whatever should be given except in that house, or by affording the means of emigrating?—My answer is, that it would be extremely advisable to have such a house; that it would check the present dissipated habits of the labourers, and prevent injudicious interference on the parts of the magistrates."

Some of the witnesses whom I have examined in the Metropolis have given evidence with reference to various parts of the system of administration in the rural districts. The following examinations afford exemplifications of other portions of the existing system, and especially as to its operation on the formation of habits of frugality amongst the labouring classes, and also as to the effect of the law of settlement in connexion with the administration of relief in small parishes or districts.

EXAMINATION of Mr. William Sleeth, Albany Road, Kent Road.

"I HAVE been a witness to the gradual ruin of a very deserving class of people, effected, as well as I can judge, by the superior temptations of parish allowance and idleness, to those of independence with industry.

"I was employed from 1819 to 1831 in a commercial house, of which the greater part of the business was the sale of home-made fabrics, chiefly of stockings. The demand for homespun articles is still very extensive amongst old people of all ranks, on account of their superior warmth and durability. The call for these goods when I first became acquainted with the business, was very constant and the supply abundant, but not excessive. The competition of the factories had driven the spinners quite out of the market, and also the great bulk of the knitters, but of these latter, some of the most resolutely frugal and industrious, persevered in working for the low reward which was to be got while the employment was breaking up. But after this period of change, which had taken place before the time at which my knowledge begins, the people who had persevered remained the only workers, and just about enough to supply adequately the small surviving demand. For those who had given up never were known to resume the work, but relied upon the parish to keep them from utter destitution, and none of their young were brought up to it.

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I remember the striking contrast between the knitters and their idle neighbours. The knitters were held up by the gentry as patterns of cleanliness, regularity and sobriety, to the others, and they really were so; their command of comforts was, in most instances, nearly double that of the others, and they were moreover better husbanded. And such was the notoriety of these facts, that at the time I speak of, parishes very generally attempted to make the knitting again general, by gratuitously supplying applicants for relief with materials, but they did not succeed in their design, but materially injured the willing workers by this forced rivalry. Another fact will illustrate the superior habits of the knitters. Benevolent people would consume no goods but those made by the poor of the vicinity, for which they paid much higher than the proper prices by way of encouragement. The idle got goods of the industrious at a fair price, and presented them to the gentlefolks as the result of their own industry, and made a very handsome profit by the trick. To favour the deceit, they usually kept within sight in their cottages, the proper materials and implements, but as they were known to be idle and disorderly, and uncleanly, the deception was soon seen through, and here again the really deserving suffered, for the consumption of their articles ceased more suddenly after a factitious and artificial encouragement, than would naturally have been the case.

"Notwithstanding the general superiority of the condition of the knitters, they had many hardships to contend with, in maintaining their advantages against those who were aided by the parish and by individual charity. The man's and boy's husbandry work was less profitable, for the females and children of the other families earning nothing, and valuing the man's earnings less than they would have done their own, were less thrifty in disposing of the gains which they did not know the toil of getting, and therefore were subject to constant destitution, and this urged the men to solicit work on any terms of the farmer. Their urgency was backed by the parish, and as an inducement to the master, a means was devised by which he could have the labour cheaper through the parish making up the rest in some form or other. By this the independent labourer suffered, being obliged to work at the same wages, and to make up, by the family's spinning, what was in the other case given by the parish. It is notorious in the neighbourhood of Petworth, where I was born, that as the earnings of the family by spinning and knitting diminished, the earnings of the man diminished also, though those were the most prosperous times of agriculture, and the above is the explanation given thereabouts of the fact.

"Perhaps my account does not explain all, but I think it will be rather more plain when I say that when the married labourer and his boys were not employed in the fields, they thought it creditable, and were all able to spin or knit a little, and were thus independent of bad weather, or a slackening of farm work. What was earned in this way, was all in addition to the earnings by farm-work, as indeed were also the gains of the women and children; for, except when it was much more profitable, knitting was never allowed to interfere with agricultural labour. Now, the women almost as generally avoid the one employment as the other, for the parish, which has already made them independent of the one, makes the other equally unnecessary to them. The men and boys now would be ashamed of so employing themselves, because of the jeers of their more reckless and dissipated fellow labourers, though I know several young men who were so employed as boys about 1822, and certainly more for their credit, profit and health, than at their present occupation of leisure time in the ale-house or on the commons.

"The surviving knitters were so few comparatively at the period to which I refer, that they were always fully employed at prices much higher than had ever been known when the practice was general. In fact none were brought up to it, and none continued in it but those who had been long used to it, and of those only the most independent and exemplary. But they got the reward of their struggle in the monopoly of the supply, when all the most supine had ceased to contend with the progress of the factories.

"The earnings of a family by knitting sometimes amounted to more than 20*l.*, and commonly from 12*l.* to between 16*l.* and 18*l.*, a very large sum as every body knows who knows the economy of a well-managed cottage. These latter earnings were frequent in parts of Sussex 10 years ago, where the practice is unknown now, except by some single superannuated old women. The general shop of the village was, latterly, the medium between my employers and these poor people, who there received the materials and returned the made-up article, and could always receive the amount of their earnings at the same time. Usually they were partly taken out in goods, such as tea, soap, tapes, needles, &c., and sometimes in cash: they frequently made the dealer their banker for some portion of their gains. Such was the occasional self-denial of these people, that I know one family of the name of Hinde, that received three several years earnings in *cash*, during seven years that they were at work for us, amounting to above 43*l.* This family consisted of a man past 50, his sister older than himself, three orphan nieces, and one nephew. The history of this family is interesting. The man was and is an agricultural labourer; he speculated with his savings, purchasing the fruit or pigs of his neighbours, or their poultry, when they had a right of common, before they were fit for the market, by advance of money on them, his neighbours tending them to maturity. He had a reputation of being very rich, and often lent some few guineas to needy farmers. He found great difficulty in getting employment, it being refused him on account of his savings, which raising him above the necessity for parish allowance, served as an excuse for refusing him the work which it was pretended must be found for others, to save the rates; he bought a piece of ground to occupy himself on, when thus unjustly deprived of work, but was afraid of farming. His sister was a bit of a shrew, but very notable, and the earnings by knitting were owing wholly to her, for when she

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became bed-ridden, the industry of the girls declined, and on her death ceased altogether; they quarrelled with their uncle; the boy is now married and has a pauper family; one girl is married after having had a bastard, the other girl is in service in London, and is respectable. I consider these young people ruined solely by the example of their idle and dissolute half pauper neighbours, who are never content to be haunted by the presence of more industrious or deserving characters, and spare no effort of argument or raillery to bring them to the common level—an event of itself too much to be feared, consisting of a change from a state of care and labour, to one of profligacy and idleness.

“I should say I know 500 families who have so given up knitting for idleness and parish allowance, though their remuneration was constantly on the increase through the falling off of hands. In 1828, the quantity of these goods produced in the South became so small that we ceased to make any arrangements for them, and relied solely on the West of England, in parts where the parish allowance has not extended, and therefore where the motive to work continues unabated, yet at that time prices were more than double what could have been earned when this kind of industry was universal. If the present producers were made independent of their present industry, by the prevalence in their neighbourhood of parish allowance, I should confidently expect the like result; for I know of no place where domestic industry flourishes by the side of parish relief.

“The allowance from the poor-rate was at the bottom of the whole, for competition had ceased, and it was generally allowed by the workers that equal industry would procure more men than *twice* the quantity of food or clothing that it would have done when the employment was general and prosperous. But the labour was continuous and irksome; even the cleanliness which was indispensable to putting the work out of hand in a proper state, the confinement to the house, perhaps the control of the old people, were in violent and constant contrast with the carelessness and idleness of those who could dispense with industry by relying on the parish. Pauper women are all gossips, the men all go to the ale-house; the knitters had little time for either, and they were assured that they debarred themselves of their *rights* for the good of the rich, and it was seen that no idleness or extravagance was attended with any alarming consequences against which the parish served as a shield.

“I have every autumn been into the country, and have observed the gradual deterioration of these previously respectable families. Their clothing was in great part made at home, and was sedulously well made,—they had a pride in it; or it was procured in return for labour and not money, which makes in practice a great difference; for at all times payment in money in large sums is the most difficult achievement where earnings are small, and where the payment is to be made more frequently for a less desirable commodity and with diminished means, it may be seen that the comfort will be often foregone, which is the case.

“Cleanliness was indispensable to the work, and the work itself was cleanly; and as it kept them much at home, it made comfort in that home more necessary than it is to those who loll their time away out of doors.

“Besides, comfort and cleanliness are not the policy of those who apply to the parish; for the overseer always observes to those who are decent and tidy in their persons and houses, ‘that they seem too comfortable to want,’ and mentions his suspicions of concealed savings.

“I wish to be understood as speaking of the disappearance of these people all through, not as the result of competition with manufacturers, which did not affect the small class to which these remarks apply, but as the consequence of the diminished industry of parties who had virtually a monopoly in their own hands, but who wanted *motives* to continue the industry necessary for its preservation.

“I have to add, that I regard the demoralization of these people as a further evil in the way of loss of a good example; for wherever they remained, in ever so small number, the superiority of their appearance was a model for their equals in grade, and formed a sort of *ton* for the rest, to which the parish officers and the gentry constantly pointed, and strove to make the general habit; but as they lost the characteristic the standard fell, and those who had formerly been pointed out as patterns, are become undistinguishable from the rest. My observation is, that the air of content and cheerfulness which formerly distinguished them has been displaced, in the very same individuals, by the common pauper appearance; that is, they look dirty, ill fed, discontented, careless and vicious.”

Mr. William Hickson, senior, states: “As a manufacturer at Northampton, as a tradesman employing workmen in London, and as the owner of some land at Stansford, in Kent, I have had various opportunities of observing the operation of the Poor Laws.

“The general effect of the present system is, to stop the circulation of labour, and to prevent forethought. I find that whenever workmen are out of work, they will not shift to places where work might be got, for fear of losing their parishes. In this parish, I am one of the board for the management of the poor. If, when shoemakers have applied for relief, and stated as the ground that they have no work, I have told them that they might get work at Northampton, they have objected on the ground that the wages were low there; in fact, I have found that it is the parochial relief which holds them here; for I knew at the same time, that good work was to be had at Northampton. The present system makes them believe that, when their own supply of work is interrupted, the parish officers are bound to find work for them or give them relief; and that no one is obliged or ought to leave his parish in search of work. If the other parish officers, instead of giving money, had joined with me in offering to take such men into the house, they would have gone for work elsewhere, and got it. One of the men who applied was what was called a ‘don workman,’ who would have ensured work anywhere, as he had worked for the first houses in London. Then the settlement law operates in another way to impede the circulation of labour.

Effects of the Law
of Settlement, com-
bined with the pre-
sent system of relief,
on the circulation of
Labour.

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labour. If workmen sent to Northampton do not immediately get into work, not having been accustomed to provide against such a contingency, the law relieving them from the obligation of forethought, they are at once hurried back to their own parishes by passes. Some time ago a panic took place, by which the shoe manufactories were stopped, and a great number of the men thrown out of work. These men, having saved nothing, were compelled to apply to the parishes. The parish officers there immediately passed them home to their parishes in different and distant parts of the country. The furniture of numbers of workmen was sold, and they, with their families, were transported to their own parishes, some of them on the borders of Wales. Soon after they were sent away the trade revived, and was remarkably brisk, and the labour of these workmen was wanted. Many of them who had been mischievously sent away at the parish expense, were now brought back at the parish expense. If these persons had been entitled to relief at the spot where it was wanted, a great deal of money would have been saved, and the workmen also would have been spared much misery.

"The check to the circulation of agricultural labour is too notorious to be talked of. The case of a man who has worked for me, will show the effect of the parish system in preventing frugal habits. This is a hard-working, industrious man, named William Williams. He is married, and had saved some money, to the amount of about 70*l.*, and had two cows; he had also a sow and ten pigs. He had got a cottage well furnished; he was the member of a benefit club, at Meopham, from which he received 8*s.* a week when he was ill. He was beginning to learn to read and write, and sent his children to the Sunday school. He had a legacy of about 46*l.*, but he got his other money together by saving from his fair wages as a waggoner. Some circumstances occurred which obliged me to part with him. The consequence of this labouring man having been frugal and saved money, and got the cows, was, that no one would employ him, although his superior character as a workman was well known in the parish. He told me at the time I was obliged to part with him,— 'Whilst I have these things I shall get no work. I must part with them all. I must be reduced to a state of beggary before any one will employ me.' I was compelled to part with him at Michaelmas, he has not yet got work, and he has no chance of getting any until he has become a pauper; for, until then, the paupers will be preferred to him. He cannot get work in his own parish, and he will not be allowed to get any in other parishes. Another instance of the same kind occurred amongst my workmen. Thomas Hardy, the brother-in-law of the same man, was an excellent workman, discharged under similar circumstances; he has a very industrious wife. They have got two cows, a well-furnished cottage, and a pig and fowls. Now he cannot get work because he has property. The pauper will be preferred to him; and he can only qualify himself for it by becoming a pauper. If he attempts to get work elsewhere, he is told that they do not want to fix him on the parish. Both these are fine young men, and as excellent labourers as I could wish to have. The latter labouring man mentioned another instance of a labouring man in another parish (Henstead), who had once had more property than he, but was obliged to consume it all, and is now working on the roads.

Labourers cannot
remove if they
would.

"Such an instance as that of William Williams is enough to demoralize a whole district. I say, myself, that the labouring man who saves where such an abominable system prevails, is foolish in doing so. What must be the natural effect of such a case on the mind of a labouring man? Will he not say to himself, Why should I save? Why should I diminish my present scanty enjoyments, or lay by anything on the chance of my continuing with my present master, when he may die, or the means of employment fail him, when my store will be scattered to waste, and I shall again be made a pauper like William Williams, before I can be allowed to work for my living? This system, so far as relates to the circulation of labour, I am firmly persuaded, can only be put an end to by utterly abolishing the law of settlement, and establishing a uniform national rate, so as to allow a man to be relieved at the place where he is in want, instead of his being pinned to the soil."

The Rev. R. R. Bailey, chaplain to the Tower, who has had extensive opportunities of observing the operation of the Poor Laws in the rural districts, states,—

"I consider that the present law of settlement renders the peasant, to all intents and purposes, a bondsman: he is chained to the soil by the operation of the system, and it forbids his acquiring property, or enjoying it openly or honestly. I am of opinion that management by hundreds, instead of by parishes, would greatly benefit all classes. Very frequent instances have occurred to me of one parish being full of labourers, and suffering greatly from want of employment, whilst in another adjacent parish, there is a demand for labour. I have no doubt that if the labourers were freed from their present trammels, there would be such a circulation of labour as would relieve the agricultural districts."

Can you give any instances within your own knowledge of the operation of the existing law of settlement?—"I was requested by Colonel Bogson, Kesgrove House, to furnish him with a farming bailiff. I found a man, in all respects qualified for his situation; he was working at 9*s.* a week in the parish where I lived. The man was not encumbered by a family, and he thankfully accepted my offer; the situation was, in point of emolument and comfort and station, a considerable advance; his advantages would have been doubled. In about a week he altered his mind, and declined the situation, in consequence, as I understood, of his fearing to remove from what was considered a good parish to a bad one, the parish to which it was proposed to remove him being connected with a hundred house, in which there is more strict management. I was requested by a poor man, whom I respected, to find a situation for his son, in London: the son was a strong young man, working at that time at about 8*s.* a week: I eventually succeeded in getting him a good situation of

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Instance where
labourers would not
remove if they could.

Not the interest of
labourers to advance
themselves by the
acquisition of
property.

one guinea per week, in London, where his labour would have been much less than it was in the country; but when the period arrived at which he was expected in London, he was not forthcoming. It appeared he had altered his mind, and determined not to take the place; as I understood, his reason for refusing to accept it arose from a reluctance to endanger his settlement in his parish. Such are the instances which are continually presented to my observation, with respect to the operation of the present system of settlement."

"I am certain that the poor labourers of those parishes with which I have been connected in the country are fully aware that it is not their interest to advance their condition by the acquisition of property. I once congratulated my bailiff on the prospect of his inheriting, by his wife, a little real property; he replied, 'It would be of no use to me, sir; for I should be less able to get employment, and could obtain no relief until it was all spent.' When the gentlemen and clergy in the neighbourhood of Henley contemplated the establishment of a savings-bank in their neighbourhood, I thought it my duty to address the young men on the subject, after morning service, and urge upon them the propriety of saving for their protection against the contingencies of sickness and old age. They listened to me very attentively. One or two persons asked me whether I honestly thought it would not be for the benefit of the parish more than themselves if they saved? I was startled by the inquiry, but, on consideration, I found that I really could not state that it would be for their benefit to save. The decided conviction of the whole body of the labourers was, that any saving would be for the benefit of the parish and the farmers, and not for the benefit of the individuals saving." [See further evidence of this witness in the account of the Worship-street District. See further evidence of the effects of the law of settlement, under the head of Irish labourers.]

DISPAUPERIZED PARISHES.*

COOKHAM, BERKS.

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY Expended on Relief of the P O O R.	
	In- habited.	Unin- habited.	Build- ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.		
1801	325	9	—	—	—	2,239	346	—		£.
1811	474	12	—	—	—	2,411	519	—	1776	818
1821	509	15	2	1,344	1,390	2,734	614	—	1785	839
1831	635	12	10	1,662	1,675	3,337	767	838	1803	2,574
									1812-13	3,907
									1813-14	3,703
									1814-15	2,939
									1815-16	3,265
									1816-17	3,303
									1817-18	3,800
									1818-19	3,136
									1819-20	3,133
									1820-21	2,416
									1821-22	2,608
									1822-23	1,857
									1823-24	1,367
									1824-25	1,097
									1825-26	996
									1826-27	1,162
									1827-28	1,039
									1828-29	1,155
									1829-30	1,155
									1830-31	932
									1831-32	835

AGRICULTURE.		1831.	MANUFACTURE.		1831.	All others not com- prised in the two preceding Classes.		1831.
No. of Families chiefly employed in Agriculture -		208	No. of Families chiefly employed in Trade, &c. -		274	No. of Families -		285
Occupiers employ- ing Labourers -		28	Males 20 Years of Age, employed in Manufacture		1	Males 20 Years of Age, not Ser- vants, nor includ- ed in the two pre- ceding Classes -		44
			Ditto, employed in Retail Trade -		275			
			Capitalists, Bank- ers, &c. - -		38	SERVANTS.		
			Labourers employ- ed in Labour not Agricultural -		118	Males 20 Years old — under 20 -		43 16
						Females - -		191

REAL PROPERTY, amount of, in 1815 - - - - -		£. 15,243.
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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

The first parish I visited in this county was the parish of Cookham, which is distinguished by the introduction of a system of administering the Poor Laws similar to that pursued in Southwell, in Nottinghamshire, and also to the system adopted in the parish of Hatfield, in Hertfordshire.

I received from the Rev. Thomas Whately, the vicar of Cookham, by whose influence the new system was introduced, every assistance that I could require; the most complete answers to all my inquiries, and the necessary evidence, and indications of other evidence, on every point which appeared to be of importance.

In his evidence before the Committee of the House of Lords, Mr. Whately stated the outline of the system of management adopted at Cookham. I had the good fortune to find several intelligent witnesses, who are intimately acquainted with the working of the system, and from them, as well as from the communications of Mr. Whately, I am enabled to give the subjoined account of it.

Half the town of Maidenhead is within the parish of Cookham; but the corporation of that town has a chapel entirely independent of the vicar, and appoints its own chaplain; and the population of this portion of the parish do not come within Mr. Whately's jurisdiction, and are intimately connected with the parish of Bray, where the management is the reverse of that adopted at Cookham.

It may have been observed, that whilst the population increased from 2,239 to 3,337, the poor's-rates increased from about 1,000*l.* to about 4,000*l.*, and it was found that pauperism and wretchedness increased in the parish almost in the same ratio as the rates. Mr. Whately describes in the following terms the effects of the allowance-money system, which had been adopted in this parish:—

"While the weekly wages of an agricultural labourer were still kept so very low, that an industrious man could not subsist himself upon his earnings, this allowance of bread money adapted itself to the circumstances of each particular family, without any reference at all to their moral qualities. The consequence was, that all distinction between the frugal and the prodigal, the industrious and the idle, the prudent and the thoughtless, was destroyed at once. All were *paupers* alike. The most worthless were sure of *something*, while the prudent, the industrious, and the sober, with all their care and pains, obtained *ONLY something*; and even that scanty pittance was doled out to them by the overseer. Like the Israelites in the Wilderness, 'They gathered some more, some less; yet he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they *only* gathered every man according to his eating.' Wages were no longer a matter of contract between the master and the workman, but a *right* in the one, and a *tax* on the other; and by removing the *motives* for exertion, the labourer was rendered by this mischievous system, as far as was possible, *totally unworthy of his hire*. The *moral* and intellectual character of the good old English labourer (who in former times had boasted with honest pride that he never was beholden to a parish officer) was destroyed altogether; all habits of prudence, of self-respect, and of self-restraint, vanished; and since a family was a sure *passport* to a *parish allowance*, it is not to be wondered that the most improvident marriages were the consequence of this most pernicious and most demoralizing system. Indeed, we have seen *three generations of paupers*, (the father, the son, and the grandson,) with their respective families at their heels, trooping to the overseer every Saturday for their weekly allowances: boys and girls marrying without having provided a bed to sleep upon, or a roof to cover them; the parish was to provide every thing. The most wretched hovels were converted into houses, the rents of which were charged to the parish account. In this village, a carpenter's workshop has been divided into *four tenements*, for which the parish was charged five pounds a year apiece."

Effect of the Allow-
ance system in
Cookham.

About ten years ago, although the rates had somewhat diminished since the year 1817 and 1818, yet, from the fall of prices, their pressure was severely felt; and the principal parishioners clearly saw that the system was in ruinous progress. Their first step was to form a select vestry. They had not been accustomed to act together, and feeling themselves somewhat at a loss in their first proceedings, several of them solicited Mr. Whately to attend. He consented, but upon the express undertaking he should be allowed to retire without giving offence, if a course of proceeding were adopted which, upon reflexion, he did not think beneficial to the parish. A little before this time Mr. Sawyer, of White Waltham, had carried into execution some measures for checking the increase of pauperism, by rendering the condition of the able-bodied pauper on the whole less eligible than that of the able-bodied labourer.

The proposed amendments, however, met with considerable opposition. The opponents of amendment said, "Why make this change, and agitate the parish, when things are going on much as they should do? The rates have been gradually reduced, and have been considerably reduced within the last year." The farmers being told by those adverse to the introduction of any amendment, that the reduction of the poor's-rates amounted to about one thousand a year, were baffled by this argument; though they were unanimous in declaring that the pressure was severe, and that it was that severity which had brought them together. Mr. Whately however asserted, that the apparent reduction of the rates was fallacious; that in truth they had risen very considerably.

Ground of opposition
to amendment.

The fallacy arose from not understanding or not observing one operation of the system of relief in money, that the *relief* continues the *same*, while the *situation* of the *reliever* *varies*. By giving the whole amount of money raised for the relief of the poor in this parish in peck loaves, at the price of bread in each year, it appeared that when the poor's-rate amounted to nearly 4,000*l.* the consumption of bread produced by this enormous sum was *ten thousand loaves*. While the *money* expended by the poor's-rates in this year (1821) was really not much more than two thousand pounds of the higher rates, the bread produced to the paupers by this latter sum was *sixteen thousand loaves*. They did not observe,

Reduction of the
money payments of
rates consistent with
an increase of pay-
ment in produce, and
an increased pressure
on the rate-payer.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

that as the farmer's money arose from grain, he could not afford to pay in a coin that was not equally depreciated in value; they did not perceive that their goose *now* laid *silver*, not golden eggs. To prove the fallacy, he prepared the following Tables: the first shows the progress of the rates in Cookham parish; the second shows the progress of the rates through the whole county of Berks. By these Tables it appears that whilst the parish is so much improved by the adoption of the measures, the rates of the county at large have advanced.

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

YEARS.	Money spent.	Price of Peck Loaf in July every Year.	Number of Peck Loaves.	Deduct 338 l. in Peck Loaves at the Price of Bread in each Year.	Number of Peck Loaves consumed by the Poor in each Year.
	£. s. d.	s. d.			
1812-13 - -	3,907 10 -	at 6 8	11,722	1,016	10,706
1813-14 - -	3,703 8 -	6 2	12,011	1,096	10,915
1814-15 - -	2,939 12 1	4 -	14,698	1,690	13,008
1815-16 - -	3,265 5 6	3 10	17,036	1,785	15,251
1816-17 - -	3,303 - -	4 4	15,844	4,560	13,684
1817-18 - -	3,800 10 8	5 8	13,413	1,193	12,220
1818-19 - -	3,136 5 4	4 2	15,054	1,622	13,432
1819-20 - -	3,133 7 5	3 6	17,909	1,931	15,978
1820-21 - -	2,416 4 -	3 6	13,806	1,931	11,875
1821-22 - -	2,608 9 2	2 10	18,412	2,385	16,027
1822-23 - -	1,857 10 5	2 10	13,112	2,385	10,727
1823-24 - -	1,367 5 10	3 3	8,414	2,080	6,334
1824-25 - -	1,097 11 2	3 7	6,125	1,886	4,239
1825-26 - -	996 16 6	3 6	5,696	1,931	3,765
1826-27 - -	1,162 10 10	3 -	7,564	2,564	4,977
1827-28 - -	1,039 16 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 -	6,744	2,564	4,180
1828-29 - -	1,155 3 11	3 -	7,493	2,564	4,928
1829-30 - -	1,155 1 - $\frac{1}{2}$	3 6	6,600	2,259	4,341

Select Vestry.

N. B.—£. 338 is the average of county rates, church rates, law expenses, and salaries, for the years 1823-24, 1824-25, 1825-26.

A STATEMENT of the POOR RATES for the County of *Berks*, taken from a Paper printed by Order of The House of Commons, entitled "Local Taxation," calculated in Peck Loaves, as in the former case.

YEARS.	Money spent.	Price of a Peck Loaf in July in each Year.	Number of Loaves it would purchase.
	£.	s. d.	
1813 -	160,872	6 2	521,747
1814 -	129,668	4 -	648,340
1815 -	100,297	3 10	523,288 $\frac{1}{2}$
1816 -	105,815	4 4	488,376 $\frac{3}{4}$
1817 -	141,870	5 8	500,717 $\frac{1}{2}$
1818 -	157,959	4 2	758,203 $\frac{1}{2}$
1819 -	143,243	3 6	818,531
1820 -	123,280	3 6	704,457
In the Years 1821 -	112,659	2 10	795,240
1822 -	104,338	2 10	736,503
1823 -	84,918	3 3	522,572 $\frac{1}{4}$
1824 -	91,110	3 7	508,520 $\frac{3}{4}$
1825 -	95,189	3 6	543,937
1826 -	101,279	3 -	675,193 $\frac{1}{3}$
1827 -	99,527	3 -	663,513 $\frac{1}{3}$
1828 -	96,258	3 -	647,120
1829 -	105,624	3 6	603,565 $\frac{1}{2}$

Select Vestry.

The parish saved by the plurality of votes under Mr. Sturges Bourne's Act. Reduction of the rates denounced as a measure for the relief of the landlord and not of the tenants.

A division took place, when the parish was saved by the plurality of votes. Had there been only single votes, the select vestry would have been defeated, as most of the single voters had a positive interest in the mismanagement of the affairs of the parish, and others were under their immediate influence. Mr. Whately thinks that the same state of things would be found in all agricultural parishes; that the small voters would out-vote the others. Here the persons attending the vestry are only considerable tenants, there being no proprietors in the parish; and they had the merit of acting steadily, though they were told by their opponents, that even if the expected change was as beneficial as it was hoped it might be, yet that the benefit would only accrue to the landlord, and not to the tenant. The facts, however, have not justified this assertion, though the farms, as they have fallen out

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out of lease, have readily obtained tenants, which it is true under other circumstances might not have been the case, as indeed has occurred at Iver and other neighbouring parishes, where good farms that have fallen in have remained tenantless.

[Some other portions of the examination of Mr. Whately, will be found under the head of "Common rights, Cottage Allotments, Pigs, Cows for Cottagers," &c.]

The means then by which the change of system was effected at Cookham appeared to have been—

First. By never encouraging out-door poor; by never making allowances to paupers living out of the parish; by never giving poor-rates in aid of wages; never paying the rents of the labourers' cottages; never omitting to rate them.

Secondly. As regards the able-bodied labourers who apply for relief, giving them hard work at low wages by the piece, and exacting more work at a lower price than is paid for any other labour in the parish. In short, to adopt the maxim of Mr. Whately, to let the labourer find that the parish is the hardest taskmaster and the worst paymaster he can find, and thus induce him to make his application to the parish his last and not his first resource.

Thirdly. By workhouse regulations; the chief of which are—

1st, The division of the paupers into two classes; one class comprising the old, the infirm, the sick and impotent; the other class comprising the idle, the improvident and vicious. This class actually comprehended the whole of the able-bodied paupers.

2dly, Subjecting the last class to restrictions, with the view of rendering their condition less eligible than the condition of the independent labourer; e.g. allowing them only bread and cheese; permitting none to absent themselves from the workhouse, or to receive visitors there without a written order from an overseer.

To the first class (*i. e.* the old and infirm) is allowed what is deemed an ample supply of butcher's meat and other suitable food.

The second class of paupers was speedily thinned, when they were obliged to work hard by the grate, or at piece-work, for lower wages than they could get elsewhere. The work provided was trenching; an acre of hard gravelly ground was hired for the purpose. Some of the vestry at the outset considered that this quantity of land would be utterly inadequate. Many of the farmers thought the parish officers would have to trench the whole parish; but it turned out that not more than a quarter of an acre was wanted for the purpose. The labourers worked much better when the protection for bad labour was withdrawn; their labour made a better return to the farmer's capital; the demand for labour improved, and wages were improved. About sixty-three heads of families, which were formerly constantly on the parish, now at once disappeared. The discontinuance of the old system also gave an immediate check to improvident marriages.*

A priori speculation of some of the farmers.

The money payments were discontinued as much as possible. The following case will serve as an example of the effects of the change of system, in respect to out-door relief by money payments. A man who went by the name of Webb was hanged for horse-stealing. He left a widow and several small children. The widow applied to the select vestry for relief the week after his execution. It was suspected they possessed resources which would enable them to provide for their own wants without parochial relief; and in consequence of this suspicion the vestry ordered them to come to the workhouse three times a week for such relief in kind as was deemed necessary. The woman begged to be allowed the money, or less money than the value of the bread, which was refused. The result was, that she never applied, and she never received any relief whatever. In this case, as in almost all others, it would have been utterly impossible for the parish officers to have ascertained whether the pauper did or did not possess the suspected resources. Had relief, such as was requested, been readily granted, as it generally would, under the influence of the feelings of pity and from the impulse of blind benevolence, or from the love of popularity in appearing to yield to the demand for assistance in a case so deeply affecting the sympathies, or from a dread of unpopularity from the imputation of hard-heartedness "towards poor children who could not be supposed to participate in their father's crime," or from the love of ease and the want of firmness to refuse, a WHOLE FAMILY would have been placed as paupers or consumers of the labour of the industrious; the children of the woman would have been further demoralized, and rendered as miserable themselves as they were worthless and mischievous to others. The course of blind benevolence, but real cruelty, would have been productive of pain to this family, and the extra indulgence applied for would moreover have been injustice towards the children of the meritorious, to whom the rule was applied without relaxation. All the members of the family are well known to Mr. Whately, in whose parish they reside, and they are in a satisfactory and thriving condition. So that in this

The application of expanded benevolence exemplified.

* The following is in this respect an instance already given by Mr. Whately, of the operation of the improved management. "There was one man who was a postillion, and he was about sixty years old, with a very short jacket and a plaited shirt; he had married a barmaid of about eighteen, and had one child; and he came to the parish for relief expecting to have a weekly allowance: we asked him how he came to be out of employment; he said he had had a few words with his master. We recommended him to have a few more, and to try whether he could not make up the difference, for that we had nothing for him but some trenching, which we were afraid he would dislike. He went away; we never heard anything of him from that day to this."

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E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

Most active oppo-
nents of the system.

this case, which will apply to all others, the pauper would have had the relief of the exact kind and suitable (*i.e. bread, not gin*), had it been absolutely necessary; but would be driven to her own resources, if she possessed any.

The persons who violently opposed the introduction of the new system were for the most part little shopkeepers, who profited by the old system. The publicans made a great complaint. The whole opposition was organized and encouraged by those who lived on the publicans. There were some farmers who held back until they saw the result of the experiment. The measure which excited the most tumult was the rating of the cottages, and the refusal to contribute to the payment of rents; finding many of this class most tumultuous, it was thought by the vestry prudent to take a few from each division of the parish as examples, and thus to settle the question with the rest by proxy. One of the ringleaders (William Sexton) who had never paid rent or rates, and who had behaved very insolently, in consequence of his son (a lad of 16, who was out of work) being refused relief, was selected to be made an example of; and the demand for rates was enforced upon him. He has since constantly paid his rates and rent, and though his family has much increased since that time, he has never received any parochial relief. He has become an orderly and respectable person, and shows great attachment to Mr. Whately, to whom formerly he behaved in a dogged and ungracious manner. I saw the account of this person in the savings bank, and for his station the money was considerable. The lad above alluded to is now a respectable and very well-dressed shopman in London. He came to see Mr. Whately, and thank him for all past favours, the greatest of which was the refusing him relief. Had the old system of relief been continued, this boy and his brothers would probably have been paupers for life.

The following is a portion of my Examination of Mr. *Whately*.

The workhouse system, the only one practicable.

"You have spoken of the workhouse system, as the only means of producing the desired effect, and yet you appear to have dispauperized the parish without taking the able-bodied paupers into the workhouse?—Yes. Although we got rid of the able-bodied paupers by giving them trenching, and without taking them into the workhouse, yet that was only a temporary expedient, and it would not have been possible to have effected this without having had the workhouse in the rear to fall back upon: nor will it be possible, as I conceive, to continue the beneficial arrangements in the parish without it. The first irruption of paupers were got rid of by specific labour, but the incidental paupers who were continually coming as the *avant couriers* to a tribe of others, could not have been provided with work, especially in the time of frost or snow, and these were silenced by the offer of the workhouse. When a single pauper came in, we could not provide out-door work; we could not have employed a superintendent to superintend the work of one man, nor could we have got trenching for one man, or for two men. If we had not the workhouse to retire upon, we should have had an influx of paupers applying for work during the winter whenever the ground was closed by frost or snow. The workhouse, we have found, is the only means of stopping gaps of this kind, and I am persuaded, that it is the only means by which the same results can be effected throughout the country.

No dislocation of the population in consequence of the system.

"Did the change of system drive any of the parishioners into other parishes?—Certainly not. Not a single family of parishioners of the labouring class has removed; and what is more remarkable is, that although the allowance formerly given to parishioners living at a distance was discontinued, none were brought home.

"Do you mean that not one family of parishioners of the labouring class has removed from the parish since the change of system?—I do. Of course I do not mean to state that the youth of both sexes are not encouraged to look out for suitable services wherever they may be found; and many have done themselves and their friends credit by doing so, who under the old system of relief might have had their efforts paralysed, and have continued through life a burden both to themselves and their friends.

Advance in the condition of the labourers.

"Is it observed that the personal condition of the labourers has in any respect changed since the change of system of administering the poor-rates?—Decidedly. A labourer, formerly a pauper, came to the vestry not long since, to make inquiries respecting a house, in order to rent; when he had retired, one of the farmers exclaimed how neatly he was dressed, and how good his coat was; to which I answered, 'I can explain the reason of the change; it is, that there is no longer a bonus offered by the vestry for rags and dirt. You all remember when ragged clothes were kept by the poor for the express purpose of coming to the vestry in them; whereas the articles of clothing which we sell to the poor at prime cost have every year, since the establishment of a select vestry, been required to be of an improved quality.'

"Do you mean to state that they purchase more expensive articles?—I do; the blankets I send for from Witney are required to be larger and of a better quality; and so of all other articles.

"Do the labourers care to acknowledge to you that they wish to have the articles they purchase of a better quality?—Yes; and I find them less zealous of acknowledging their real condition than formerly; as they now rather value themselves upon their respectability, than, as formerly, attempt to impose and extort money by pretended destitution.

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"Is their food better or worse than formerly?—I think better. The labourers have a meal of meat once a day, and there is hardly a cottage that has not a supply of bacon on the rack.

"Has their general moral conduct improved, so far as you, as a minister, have observed?—I think it decidedly has; for although there is much vice to be lamented in this parish as in all other large communities, yet there is one decisive fact, which is, that there has been but one bastard christened in each year for the last five years, though the population is 3,337. In the year 1822 there were 26 bastards receiving weekly allowances; now there are but five, the produce of former years.

"Has there been any reduction in the allowance to the widows and elderly persons who live out of the house?—Yes, a very considerable one; two-thirds of the whole amount.

"But has not this been productive of severe suffering?—No, not at all; because many of them had friends who could assist them, and all had the option of being received into the house, where their food would have been of a better description than they had ever been accustomed to. In proof that most of them had resources from the assistance of their friends, I need only adduce the fact, that 36 aged persons were placed upon the reduced allowance, of whom, two only have been received into the workhouse; and those two, from circumstances of helpless infirmity, which would have rendered the measure necessary, had the profuse allowance continued.

"Has no clamour been raised on this head?—Yes, a great deal; as much as cackling old women, of both sexes, and their adherents, could raise. Many of those who were interested in a profuse expenditure were glad to put those persons forward as their *cheval de bataille*, in order to impose on the weak and the credulous, who live at a distance, and do not give themselves the trouble to inquire into the plain facts of the case.

*Clamours in respect
of the old women.*

"You do not then ascribe this clamour to disinterested motives, and you think that it has subsided?—Just so.

"Did the real motives become apparent?—Yes.

"In what way?—Thinking that those who were the loudest in exciting this clamour were persons the least actuated by real benevolence, I drew out a statement of the sums actually paid by every individual in the parish for poor-rates, for the last eight years immediately preceding the appointment of the select vestry. This I put in one column; and in a second column I stated the sums actually paid by the same individuals during the eight years that the new system had been in operation; and striking a balance, I stated in a third column the sum actually *saved* to each individual by the operation of the new system. And with this book in my hand, when the accounts were laid before the parish at large, in a very full vestry convened for that purpose, I stated, that if any person still persisted in the clamour that had been raised on the subject of the reduced allowances to the aged, I *had* the pleasure to tell them that if they would look at that account, they would find that they had each of them the money to relieve every species of distress from those very resources which had been furnished to them by the operation of that system which they were so clamorously opposing; and that it must be far more consistent with real benevolent feelings to be their own almoners, and to use their own discretion in the distribution of their charity, than to have the money wrung from them by a relentless overseer, and indiscriminately distributed amongst the profligate and vicious, as well as those who were really friendless. The total sum which it appeared had thus been saved to the parish was 15,008*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*; the sums noted in this statement as saved to some individuals then present, were in such items as 695*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.*; 455*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.*; 305*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*; 214*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.*; so that there could be no doubt remaining in the minds of every person present, that the clamourers themselves possessed ample means from the very savings that had been effected to themselves individually of relieving, had they been disposed to do so, every individual of the thirty-six cases they clamoured about. This statement received additional force from its appearing accidentally just at this moment that one of the 36 aged persons, named Wicks, was at that time possessed of 75*l.* which she had saved from the allowance given her by the parish. The woman had become paralytic, and the circumstance of the hoard became known, from her sons-in-law quarrelling about its distribution.

*Test of the sincerity
of the clamourers.*

"Do you think your example would be followed if extensively known?—I very much doubt it. I believe it is pretty extensively known, but it has been followed only in one or two solitary cases, so far as I am aware of.

*Improbability of a
voluntary imitation
of the system.*

"Are you aware that any pains have been taken by the neighbouring parishes to ascertain the nature of your system?—Yes; many have made themselves fully acquainted with it by personal application to me; but either through indolence or want of firmness, or some other cause, have not availed themselves of the information they have received; nor have I any reason to hope that a great national benefit can be effected by the personal exertions of individuals, who must necessarily expose themselves to considerable obloquy, if not to great loss of property, and who, in many cases, have no immediate personal interest in the discharge of the duties they undertake."

"If you were to withdraw your exertions, do you think that the present system would be carried on in your parish?—Many of the principal rate-payers with whom I act, are of opinion that it would not.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

*E. Chadwick,
Esq.*

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

*Legislative amend-
ments, difficulty of.*

*The pecuniary saving
unimportant as com-
pared with the moral
gain.*

*Farther evidence of
the improvement in
the condition of the
labourers.*

*The most respect
paid to the most
cleanly of the la-
bourers: no sympathy
lavished on the squalid
and the filthy.*

"How then would you propose to secure its permanency in your parish, and its adoption in others?—I think that this can only be effected by a legislative enactment. In the neighbouring parish of White Waltham, where the same system was adopted with equal or greater success, the select vestry has been discontinued in consequence of the non-attendance of its members. I fear similar causes will usually produce similar effects elsewhere.

"Do you think that the exact system adopted in your parish could be prescribed and enforced in all other parishes by means of any legislative enactment?—I think that the leading features and principles of our plan might be adopted in a legislative enactment; but as there are parishes of all sizes and descriptions, from the most gigantic to the most puny, the legislature could no more make one specific enactment to fit all parishes, than a tailor could make one coat to fit the person of every one of his customers. Of course I conclude that any legislative enactment must be modified to meet local circumstances, which I think might easily be done without departing from the principles of the enactment.

"Do you believe that the reduction of the poor's-rates by the application of the new system would be as great throughout the country as it has been in your parish?—I have no reason to doubt it. I think one-half or two-thirds of the poor's-rates might be saved; but judging from my experience in my own parish, I should say, that even if no money were saved, the moral improvements and increased comforts of the community to be derived from such a system would more than compensate the trouble of the legislature. I have often declared, both in public and private, that if all the money we have saved (which was upwards of 15,000*l.* in the first eight years) had been thrown into the Thames, the parish at large would have been enriched by the acquisition of wealth by the improved nature of the labour of the late rate-receivers, independently of the moral improvement which has accompanied their improved frugality and industry."

[For the further Examination of Mr. Whately, see "Commons, Cottage Allotments," &c.]

From the experience derived in the administration of the system thus displayed, Mr. Whately is of opinion, that were the noxious mode which now prevails of administering the poor laws discontinued, benefit societies and other similar institutions would immediately "spring up like mushrooms."

At the time of my visit, the deposits in the savings bank from the parishioners of Cookham amounted to the sum of nearly 7,000*l.* A considerable number of the present contributors had been paupers chargeable to the parish at the time of the old system being discontinued. Mr. Sawyer, the treasurer and constant attendant of the savings bank, told me that the deposits from Cookham were greater than from any other part of the district comprehended by that bank. The annual deposits from Cookham had risen from 310*l.* to 682*l.*, and 39*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* was collected in eight months from the children of the village. This money, collected in the weekly sum of a penny each, is one of the most certain tests that they are not in want, as no one would subscribe a penny who was in want of a penny roll. Again, there are three schools in the village; one has sixty children, whose parents pay 1½*d.* per week and Mr. Whately and other subscribers pay 1*d.* There is another just commenced, where there are at present only 12 children, where the children pay 2*d.* per week, and Mr. Whately a penny. There is likewise a night-school in the winter months for young lads, of whom there are 20, who pay 3*d.* per week, and Mr. Whately a penny.

Mr. Whately feels it part of his clerical duty to urge upon individuals of his flock the necessity and moral duty of frugality and foresight; and has endeavoured to lead the labouring classes by setting an example consistently with his station. He is himself a member of the benefit society; several of the farmers are also members. It was indeed instituted by farmers, and is managed by them; but, as he has already stated in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Lords, they show no jealousy of the interference of their superiors; on the contrary, they find that the circumstance of their being members of the benefit society recommends them to the notice of their employers.

A course of conduct with relation to the labouring classes has been pursued by Mr. Whately which is deserving of especial attention, as being of important service in the prevention of pauper habits; and that is, paying marked respect to those labourers who were members of friendly societies, or depositors in savings banks, or who were cleanly in their persons, and kept their families and cottages in a superior condition. On the other hand, no assistance was given to ragged filthy people, none of the common sympathy was shown for squalid poverty. He gives to the labouring classes the advantage of his superintendence in the purchase of fuel and clothing at wholesale prices, and the sale of it to them at prime cost.

Some very striking consequences have resulted from the operation of the present system. In the eight years preceding the operation of the new system, the increase of population was very rapid; for the eight years subsequent there was, as compared with the eight years preceding, a positive diminution.

Bastardy has been almost extinguished. For the last five years only one bastard has been christened each year.

Improvident marriages are less frequent.

The

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The general condition of the labouring classes in the parishes has in other respects been greatly improved. Mr. Russell, the magistrate of Swallowfield, stated to me, that in riding through Cookham, he was so much struck with the appearance of comfort observable in the persons and residences of some of the labouring classes of that village, that he was led to make inquiries into the cause. The answers he received determined him to exert his influence to procure a similar change of system in Swallowfield.

During the agricultural riots there was no fire, no riots, no threatening letters in the parish. In the midst of a district which was peculiarly disturbed, Cookham and White Waltham, where a similar system of poor law administration was adopted, entirely escaped, although in Cookham there are several thrashing machines, and the only paper-mill had, at the time of the riots, been newly fitted by machinery.

There is a lying-in charity established in the parish, and Mr. Whately officiates as the almsman of several benevolent individuals; but all charitable modes of relief which exist there at present, existed there before the parish was dispauperised. They did not check the progress of pauperism, and as Mr. Whately states, they had nothing to do with its extinction. The savings banks and benefit societies were consequences, and in no way causes of the amendment. I may observe here, once for all, that this was the case in the other dispauperized parishes, where inquiries were made as to the effect on savings mani-
 fested by the change of system.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

The increase of
Savings Banks and
Friendly Societies,
consequences, and in
no way causes of the
change.

I visited a large proportion of the cottages in the village of Cookham and some in Cookham Dean. The cleanliness and comfort which appeared to pervade the interiors of those I visited, certainly corresponded with the condition of the exterior, which had attracted the attention of Mr. Russell and others who have inspected the village. In company with Mr. Whately I visited several of the residences of the labourers at their dinner time, and I observed that in every instance meat formed part of the meal, which appeared to be ample, and set forth in a very cleanly manner. One cottage in the village of Cookham, and the wife and family of the cottager were most repulsively filthy and wretched in their appearance; and it was somewhat singular that this family was a pauper family, the head of which received an allowance in aid of his wages from an adjacent parish.

Some trim hedges, and ornaments in the gardens of the labourers were pointed out to me, and it was stated that nothing of that sort had been seen in those places before the parishes had been dispauperised. Mr. Knapp, the assistant overseer, stated that the labourers were no longer afraid of having a good garden with vegetables and fruit in it; they were no longer afraid of having a pig, and no longer afraid of being tidy. Before the changes took place he had been in public-houses, and had seen paupers drunk there, and heard them declare in the presence of the rate-payers, that they (the paupers) had had more strong drink than the rate-payers had; and *would* have it, and that the rate-payers could not help themselves.

Mr. Robinson, a member of the Society of Friends and an active partisan for the introduction of Poor Laws into Ireland, whilst I was at Cookham, came for the purpose of visiting the vicar. The visitor gave a highly enthusiastic account of the impression which the appearance of the place had produced upon his mind, and noticed several points that had escaped my attention; one of which was, the exposed state of the grapes over some of the doors, and of the fruit in the gardens. I had observed in the pauperised district of Eastbourne the evidence of a comparative state of insecurity; viz. rewards for informations respecting thefts, affixed to the inclosures of labourers' allotments or gardens, which were without fruit trees, and comparatively wretchedly stocked.

Mr. Whately stated, that he was very favourably circumstanced in one respect for carrying on the change, namely, that he had a fixed income, and had no interest in the tithes; so that pecuniarily not one penny saving was made to him by the rates being high or low; but, on the contrary, he was the only person in the parish who had suffered by the change of system, as he now paid rates, which he had never done before the appointment of the select vestry.

He received a present of plate from a number of the rate-payers, as a testimonial of their sense of his services.

These beneficial effects Mr. Whately stated had been greatly impeded by the operation of Mr. Goulburn's Act for the establishment of beer shops. Mr. Whately strongly urged that something should be done to arrest the progress of that mischievous measure. He was of opinion that all the contemplated benefits of the abolition of the brewers' monopoly might be preserved, if an enactment were passed prohibiting beer being drunk on the premises of the beer seller.

Mr. Whately is decidedly of opinion that the workhouse system is the only one that can be practically and safely introduced. By the workhouse system is meant, having all relief through the workhouse, making this workhouse an uninviting place of wholesome restraint, preventing any of its inmates from going out or receiving visitors, without a written order to that effect from one of the overseers; disallowing beer and tobacco, and finding them work according to their ability: thus making the parish fund the last resource of a pauper, and rendering the person who administers the relief the hardest task-master and the worst paymaster that the idle and the dissolute can apply to.

The workhouse
system the only safe
and practicable
remedy.

Appendix (A)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.
BERKS.Amendments
suggested.Abolition of money
Payments.Separation of a bas-
tard child from its
mother at the end
of a year.Abolition of settle-
ment by hiring and
service.

Subject to the preceding observations as to the necessity of local modifications, in the detailed application of the rule laid down by the legislature, and the necessity of some agency to see that the legislative provision was complied with according to the spirit and intention of the legislature, he thought that the present system of mal-administration might be administered by the following provisions:

First. By disallowing any parochial relief to an able-bodied labourer, either in the shape of work or otherwise.

In the Instructions given by the Board to the Assistant Commissioners, it is stated, "in some places they (the magistrates) appear to act as if the property of the rate-payers were an unlimited fund to be drawn upon by the magistrates as the stewards for the paupers. In others, they appear to consider the overseers or the vestry as the proper distributors of parochial charity, and interfere, if at all, only in favour of the impotent; but as this practice is universally departed from in the worst administered rural districts, as a magistrate he thinks it would be advisable to exonerate the magistrates from their jurisdiction with respect to the able-bodied, and this he thinks, would prevent the discrepancy alluded to in the Instructions.

Secondly. By rendering all money payments illegal, except in cases of sickness.

By rendering all money payments illegal you will contribute to enforce the adoption of the workhouse system. In no case would he allow bread to be distributed except from the house door.

He was for the abolition of money payments for this, amongst other reasons, that by money payments the money continues the same, whilst the situation of the reliever varies as before explained.

The legislative provision would only be declaratory, rather than enactive of the legality of relief by money payments.

Thirdly. By enabling the parish authorities to separate a bastard from the mother at the end of a year.

With respect to bastards as the law now stands, you cannot separate a child under seven years old from its mother, nor can you force the child and the mother, or take two parties into the workhouse because one party (*i. e.* the child) has become chargeable. Mr. Whately is convinced that it would be a real kindness to the illegitimate children themselves if the laws relating to them could be altogether abrogated; but as any such measure would meet with clamorous opposition from the ignorant in all quarters, the measure above suggested would, he thinks, answer the purpose, as there are few, if any, mothers who would not relinquish the relief sooner than part with their children. (*See Evidence before the Lords' Committee, the diminution of the cases of bastardy.*) In this parish, the adoption of the plan of allowing the mother only 1s. a week, and giving her the alternative of the workhouse, has diminished the rates from 187*l.* 17*s.* 10 to 33*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* in ten years; not only has the charge of bastards been diminished, but the bastards have not been brought into existence, as it appears by the register that only one has been christened in each year for the last five years. It appears that in the former case it was 10 per cent. on the gross expenditure of the parish. The above plan must produce a similar or a greater reduction all over the kingdom.*

Fourthly. By getting rid of the present law of settlement by service and renting.

On this head Mr. Whately makes no observation, as the necessity of the measure is so universally acknowledged.

Fifthly. By making landlords in all cases subject to the poor-rates upon houses, which houses should all be rated at their full value.

The law, as it now stands, makes the overseer to charge the landlord or the tenant in certain cases. The extension of this power is too obviously beneficial to be disputed, and would act as a salutary check upon those who speculate in cottages†. It would give to all landlords an interest in the solvency and respectability of their tenants. Mr. Whately is of opinion, that the law, as it now stands, which enables a person successfully to appeal against a rate because some other houses in the parish are rated lower, is an injudicious encouragement to litigation. The issue should not be what other houses have let for, where the letting may be from ignorance or fraud, but what this particular house is worth.

* Mr. Whately gave the following instance in illustration of the immoral tendency of the bastardy laws:—"A man (John Cartland) was engaged to marry a young woman named Bishop. The woman proved to be with child by a man named Hatch. Her disgrace, added to the lover's disappointment, so affected the young man's mind, that he attempted suicide, and after some time offered to enlist for a soldier. At the expiration of two years, having gradually become reconciled to the young woman, he married her (in spite of her bastard child), and at a subsequent time, being distressed for money, he appeared before the whole assembled select vestry, and requested the loan of 40*s.*, offering the weekly pay his wife received, for her bastard child, to the parish officers as security for the repayment of the money advanced. This man, whose feelings were at one time so acute that he could not bear to live—not because he was disgraced, but because she was,—now stood before the assembled board of the respectable members of the parish, and without a blush or the apparent consciousness of shame, made his wife's disgrace a matter of bargain. Every instance of bastardy is an instance of the demoralizing effects of the bastardy laws."

† See p. 32 of the Instructions.

Reports.

HOUSES, POPULATION and EMPLOYMENTS.

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

John Sawyer, Esquire, Acting Magistrate for the Maidenhead Division.

The case of this parish may be considered anomalous, since Mr. Sawyer, as I was informed, is the largest proprietor, and possesses moreover, from other circumstances, an unusual degree of influence with his tenantry. He considered that the system was self-acting; but of late it had been difficult to obtain the attendance of a sufficient number of rate-payers to form a vestry, and Mr. Whately, who is well acquainted with the parish, declared that he believed, that if Mr. Sawyer were to quit it to-morrow, the whole administration would immediately become as bad as ever it was.

Diminished attendance at the Select Vestry.

P. L. (A.)—III.

Appendix (A.)

SHOTTESBROOKE.

Reports.		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.		
E. Chadwick, Esq.	Population - -	94	96	135	138		
		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
DISPAUPERISED PARISHES.		£. 180	£. 180	£. 187	£. 93	£. 61	£. 76
BERKS.	Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }						

*Exemplification of
the evidence in
favour of small
parishes, derived
from Statistical
Returns.*

This is an instance of a number of the small parishes which appear to such advantage as to the small proportion of their payments for poor's rates, stated in the Statistical Returns. In the answers to the circular Queries, it appeared that there was "not any labourers in this parish out of employment in summer or winter;" that the weekly wages of the labourers were "from 12s. to 18s. in summer, and 10s. in winter;" that "no distinction was made in the wages paid to the married and single men when employed by individuals;" that "no allowance was made from the poor's rates on account of large families: they had no workhouse," and only five persons who received out-door relief during the week before. They had not any bastards during the years 1829 and 1830, and in the year 1831 they paid 3*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.* only; in 1832, 2*l.* 12*s.* only; and in 1833 only the same sum on account of them. The rates "were usually about 2*s.*, but in consequence of money in hand last year, only 1*s.* in the pound; rated at about two-thirds of the value."

When the several returns from parishes in Berkshire were given to me by the secretary previous to my departure, I found that the return from this parish had been endorsed, after examination by the Board, "Excellent condition. Should be visited."

I visited the parish, anticipating that from its vicinity to Cookham, I should find another instance where the system of management in that parish had been successfully introduced.

*Means of reducing
the rates of a small
parish.*

Mr. J. Webb Aldridge, the overseer, who appeared to be a remarkably intelligent farmer, when requested to state at length the process by which the parish was brought to this prosperous condition as to pauperism, admitted to me that it was by no extraordinary merit. The fact was, that nearly the whole parish was held by one proprietor, and they obtained all the advantages of White Waltham by another process, preventing the able-bodied poor or others from obtaining settlements upon the parish. The greater part of the labourers on the farm were hired for a year all but a day, and they also obtained labourers from adjacent parishes. When it was observed that, by the power of preventing settlements, and by the system adopted in adjacent parishes of paying rates in aid of wages, they were enabled to hire the labourers of those parishes at lower wages, and to a considerable extent cultivate their land at the expense of their neighbours, he admitted the fact, that the law did give them some advantages of which he considered it his duty to avail himself, but he said he found it to his advantage to give the same wages to non-parishioners as parishioners. He acknowledged that the system gave opportunities for great abuse; that their course of proceeding in preventing settlements might be called, and indeed perhaps was, unfair: he should be willing to see the law altered; but at present their proceeding was allowed, or not forbidden by the law, which it was not for him either to impugn or to justify.

Mr. Aldridge had for 30 years been acquainted with the parish of Cookham, and was a ratepayer of that parish when the change of system took place. He spoke in very high terms of the advantages which had been derived from it, which he attributed solely to the personal influence and talents and exertions of Mr. Whately.

*The money saved to
the farmers by a good
administration of the
Poor Laws would be
expended in wages, and
better wages be given.*

From observations of the effects of the change of system produced in Cookham, and from his knowledge of the condition of the farmers in that district, and their want of capital, Mr. Aldridge had no doubt that whatever money was saved in rates by a change of the administration of the Poor Laws would be paid in wages; that the labour would be better, would make a better return for the farmer's capital, and he again be enabled to give better wages.

The following is an Account of the charge for poor's rates per head in the parishes adjacent to Cookham:

Parishes.	Population.	Money Expended.			At per Head.		
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Bisham - - -	771	415	18	1	-	10	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
Binfield - - -	1,045	931	2	-	-	17	10
Bray - - -	3,480	2,115	5	9	-	12	11 $\frac{3}{4}$
Cookham - - -	3,337	1,091	2	7	-	6	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Hurley - - -	1,150	858	19	7	-	14	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Remenham - - -	463	333	7	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	-	14	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sunning Hill - - -	1,520	766	7	-	-	10	2
White Waltham - - -	902	404	7	8	-	8	11 $\frac{3}{4}$
Shottesbrook - - -	138	79	8	-	-	11	6
Winkfield - - -	2,009	530	6	4	-	-	-

I visited

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I visited Bray, and made inquiries of persons connected with that and other adjacent parishes as to the reasons why, since the rates were so heavy in their parishes, they did not adopt the means of reducing them, which (as they were well aware) had been found so efficient and salutary in Cookham. The answers usually were to this effect:—"The farmers are so disunited, and unwilling to stir." "The members of the vestry are so jealous of each other, that they can do nothing." "We have no one to take the lead." "We have no one who will take upon himself the responsibility." "It never can be done, unless we have a man of the talent and influence of Mr. Whately amongst us to take the lead."

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chaarwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

SWALLOWFIELD.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	890	365	347	390

		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }	-	£. 303	£. 499	£. 498	£. 298	£. 517	£. 383

Mr. Charles Roberts, Assistant Overseer, and Mr. Terry, Annual Overseer, Examined.

"THIS parish is now under the management of a select vestry, which was established in the year 1829. Mr. Roberts was not connected with the parish before that time; but he knows that the practice of paying able-bodied labourers' and their families' wages partly out of the rates was increasing so rapidly, that it was found necessary to take measures to stop it. For this purpose the principal persons of property in the parish obtained a select vestry. The progress of the parish rates is exhibited in the following Account:

"A STATEMENT of the Amount of RATES collected for the Relief of the Poor in the Parish of Swallowfield, Berks, from Lady-day 1788 down to Lady-day 1832, calculated on the full Rent.

Date of the Year.	Amount in the Pound.		Date of the Year.	Amount in the Pound.	
From Lady-day	s.	d.	From Lady-day	s.	d.
1788-89 - -	3	4	1810-11 - -	6	4
1789-90 - -	3	2	1811-12 - -	9	4
1790-91 - -	3	-	1812-13 - -	10	-
1791-92 - -	2	8	1813-14 - -	7	8
1792-93 - -	3	2	1814-15 - -	6	-
1793-94 - -	3	4	1815-16 - -	4	8
1794-95 - -	3	4	1816-17 - -	9	-
1795-96 - -	3	4	1817-18 - -	9	8
1796-97 - -	3	4	1818-19 - -	9	-
1797-98 - -	3	4	1819-20 - -	7	8
1798-99 - -	3	4	1820-21 - -	6	-
1799-1800 - -	5	-	1821-22 - -	5	4
1800-1 } - -	part lost.		1822-23 - -	5	8
1801-2 } - -			1823-24 - -	6	8
1802-3 - -	4	-	1824-25 - -	5	8
1803-4 - -	4	-	1825-26 - -	6	8
1804-5 - -	4	2	1826-27 - -	6	8
1805-6 - -	5	-	1827-28 - -	6	-
1806-7 - -	4	-	1828-29 - -	5	8
1807-8 - -	4	2	1829-30 - -	6	8
1808-9 - -	4	2	1830-31 - -	5	8
1809-10 - -	6	-	1831-32 - -	3	4

"8 Nov. 1832.

P. L.(A.)—III.

"Charles Roberts, Assistant Overseer."

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The

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

The first steps of the select vestry are displayed in the following Resolutions :

“ EXTRACT from the Proceedings of the Select Vestry at *Swallowfield*, in the County of *Berks*,
16 April 1829.

- “ 1st. Resolved, That no part of the labourers' wages be paid out of the poor-rates.
- “ 2d. That men out of work be employed at hard work by those who can afford it, at very low wages.
- “ 3d. That no pauper receive relief in money, except in special cases, of which the select vestry will judge, as they arise.
- “ 4th. That the midwife be not paid by the parish.
- “ 5th. That mothers of bastard children be made to contribute to their support.
- “ 6th. That nothing be given in aid of rent or rates.
- “ 7th. That paupers in the poor-house be divided into two classes; the aged, sick, infirm, and children too young to work, composing the first class; and persons of both sexes, able-bodied, but out of work, composing the second class.
- “ 8th. That all paupers received into the poor-house be placed on the second class, till the next meeting of the select vestry, when those who are found to be proper objects will be raised to the first class.
- “ 9th. That all funerals, at the parish expense, be conducted as pauper funerals, in the most homely manner, and that the grave be dug in that part of the church-yard to be appropriated to paupers from the poor-house.
- “ 10th. That no clothing be allowed at the parish expense, but that an outfit be given, when necessary, to young persons on first going to service.
- “ 11th. That the fare of paupers in the poor-house be, for the present, for the first class, for breakfast, men, a mess of broth, gruel, rice, milk, &c.; women, bread and butter: for dinner, men, eight ounces of second bread, and one ounce of cheese per day; women and children, six ounces of the same bread and one ounce of cheese; the above for four days in the week; for the remaining three days, for dinner, half a pound of meat per head, and potatoes, or, if no potatoes, three ounces of second bread, and for supper eight ounces of second bread, and one ounce of cheese, to all alike.— For the second class, one gallon of second bread and one pound of cheese per head per week.
- “ 12th. That for the present the paupers in the house be farmed by the assistant overseer, at the weekly rate of 4 s. a head for the first, and 3 s. a head for the second class; that for this sum the assistant overseer is to find them with every thing, beds, linen, &c. &c. and to bury them at his own expense, if they die in the house.
- “ 13th. That the assistant overseer be allowed, for his own benefit, to employ the labour of all paupers in the first class, and that those of the second class be not allowed to quit the house on any pretence whatever, without leave.
- “ 14th. That every female under 14 years of age shall, on entering the house, come with hair cut short and neat, and it shall remain so as long as she continues in the house, and that no female above that age be allowed to curl her hair, or be without her cap.
- “ 15th. That the governor of the workhouse make up his accounts to the night of every fourth Thursday.
- “ 16th. That the following be the present scale of payment for labourers employed by the parish :
- “ A man, with a wife and four children, 1 s. 6 d. per day, or 9 s. per week.
- “ A man, with a wife and three children, 1 s. 4 d. per day, or 8 s. per week.
- “ A man, with a wife and two children, 1 s. 2 d. per day, or 7 s. per week.
- “ A man, with a wife and one child, 1 s. per day, or 6 s. per week.
- “ A man, with a wife, 10 d. per day, or 5 s. per week.
- “ A single man, 8 d. per day, or 4 s. per week.”

“ 12th March 1830.

“ Resolved, That the contract at present held by the governor for feeding and clothing the paupers be abolished, and that all articles for those purposes be hereafter provided on the part of the parish, the governor being allowed to take from them such firing and provisions as may be requisite for himself and family.

“ Note.— Since the abolition of the contract, the average expense to the parish, for provisions and firing (not including bedding and clothing), has been 3 s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per head per week for paupers in the first class. Since the abolition of the contract there have been no paupers in the house in the second class.”

Appointment of an assistant overseer unpopular with the small rate-payers. Strict management how opposed.

“ The appointment of an assistant overseer was unanimously passed by the rate-payers, but was very unpopular with the labouring classes. Some of the small farmers were somewhat annoyed by the loss of power. The above resolutions were framed by Mr. Terry and Mr. Russell, with the other inhabitants, at a vestry meeting. These resolutions were at once attempted to be enforced. About 40 men who had previously received part of their wages out of the rates immediately came upon the parish. The men said they would soon make the farmers sick of a select vestry, and they threw themselves upon the parish by agreement among themselves. The 40 consisted chiefly of married men. The farmers made no alteration in their wages that year, and gave no assistance to the new system.”

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

Piece-work im-
posed.Popular conception
of parish work.

"We are aware, said Mr. Roberts, that it was agreed by the labourers to summon the overseers before the magistrates on alternate weeks, to annoy them. It was reported that the labourers had declared that they would have the salary out of the assistant overseer. The magistrates, they said, had always protected the poor man, and would protect him in spite of the vestry. They summoned the overseers before the magistrates, and the first complaint preferred was, that the wages paid by the parish were less than those paid by the farmers. They were offered task-work at the gravel-pit at 8 *d.* a yard, or 1 *s.* a load for digging and sifting without loading. This had been considered a fair price with loading. The complainants contended before the magistrates, that by what they considered "a right," they ought not to be employed on the part of the parish more than from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon, although when working for farmers they were usually kept at work from six in the morning until six at night in summer, or from daylight until dark in the winter. This, which they claimed as "their right," had, in fact, been the previous practice in the parish, and was and is in a greater or less degree the practice in adjacent parishes. The magistrates admitted that the price paid by the parish for task-work was a "fair price," and declared that they could not interfere to alter the mode of relief. Notes were afterwards received by the overseers from the magistrates, "recommending" attention to particular cases, as cases of apparent hardship; but subsequently there was no active interference on the part of any magistrate until the subject of the first orders for the regulation of the workhouse were brought before the quarter sessions at Abingdon, on the 15th of July 1829."

The account of these proceedings is thus given in the minutes of the vestry.

"Mr. Terry reports that he accompanied Mr. Russell, the senior overseer, and Mr. Roberts, the keeper of the workhouse, who, in obedience to a summons and notice from J. Walter, esq., one of the justices of the peace for this county, appeared at the general quarter sessions at Abingdon, on the 15th instant, to answer certain complaints certified by the said J. Walter, esq. against the state and condition of the poor within the workhouse of this parish. The specific complaints urged by Mr. Walter were three in number:

- "1. That persons of adult age and able-bodied are not allowed a sufficient quantity of food;
- "2. That a lunatic is kept in the workhouse contrary to the statute; and
- "3. That the assistant overseer who has the management of the workhouse, is also a contractor for the supply of food to the poor there.

"And Mr. Walter's certificate closed with an application that the magistrates would make such orders and regulations for the removing of the causes of complaint contained in his certificate as to them should seem meet, according to the provisions made in the 30 Geo. 3, c. 49. The cause of the parish was conducted by Messrs. Ward & Son of Maidenhead, as solicitors, and Messrs. Shephard and Tyrwhitt, as counsel. After Mr. Walter's complaint, and the evidence in support of it had been heard, the counsel for the parish put it to the court whether such a case had been established as to induce the court to make any order upon them respecting the regulations of their workhouse. The court decided that such a case had not been made out, and consequently, that they would not make any order upon the parish. At the same time the chairman intimated, that it was the opinion of the magistrates individually that a gallon loaf and a pound of cheese per week was not a sufficient allowance for an able-bodied person of adult age*.

"Resolved, That the regulation of the 16th April last, fixing the allowance of paupers in the second class, be rescinded; that for the future the select vestry shall, in every particular instance, prescribe, according to the circumstances of the case, the allowance of food to be made to each several pauper in the second class; and that on the first admission of such paupers into the workhouse, the allowance they are to receive until the next meeting of the select vestry, shall be fixed by the overseers.

"Resolved, That the present sum of 3 *s.* a week shall continue to be paid to the keeper of the workhouse for every pauper in the second class; and that the keeper shall in his accounts make a supplementary charge, at the market price of the time, for such additional food as shall be ordered by the select vestry."

"The resolution fixing the fare of paupers in the second class had in fact never been acted upon strictly, as was proved on the cross-examination of the chief witness brought to sustain the complaint. The latter part of the 11th of the original resolutions was modified as above by a later resolution, declaring that the allowance should be made according to the circumstances of each case. No essential change has since been made in the administration of the poor laws."

There are about 10 families who receive relief as "bread money," varying from 1 *s.* to 5 *s.* a week, in consequence of the number of the members of the family. Formerly, whatever money was earned by the elder children of a family was taken no account of, farther than for their own support. Thus, if there was a family of eight children, and if the four each earned 4 *s.* a week, or if the four together earned 16 *s.* a week, the father and the mother received relief from the parish in the same manner as if they had had only the four helpless children. When work became slack, and the four able-bodied children were thrown out of employment, they all came upon the parish, and relief was given as to a family

Bread-money not
entirely abolished.
Large families, how
relieved formerly.
Large families,
improved mode of
relieving them.

* See, in the Appendix to this Report, the correspondence between Mr. Walter and Mr. Russell with relation to this proceeding.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick, Esq.

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Effects of the partial experiment of reducing, by means of labour, the condition of the pauper a little below that of the independent labourer.

a family of eight helpless children. Now, the earnings of the family collectively are taken into the account; families are relieved according to a bread scale, and the allowance of a man and his wife and eight children would be 11 gallon loaves of bread per week, the price of which would be each 1s. 3d.; making the scale allowance to a family 13s. 9d. If he earned 9s., a single day labourer's wages at the present time, he would have to receive 4s. 9d.; that is, supposing none of the family earned anything: if one of the children earned 2s. a week, then the family allowance would be 2s. 9d."

The principal changes in this parish are those of taking the earnings of children into account, and making all the able-bodied paupers work piece-work, and paying them somewhat under the farmer's price. They are paid 6d. a yard for digging gravel. There are no able-bodied labourers at present in the workhouse."

The chief results of the system are, that single independent labourers receive better wages; that the number of able-bodied claimants has been diminished by about one half, and the progress of pauperism arrested. The number of improvident marriages is diminished about one half, and the cases of bastardy are greatly reduced.

The following is the account of the diet of the workhouse supplied by Mr. Roberts:

"Management and diet of the workhouse at Swallowfield, Berks, calculated at three months' provisions.

"1st. An adult pauper not doing any work receives, meat, 24 lbs.; bread, 102 lbs.; cheese or butter, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. (which bring it, upon an average, of 1 lb. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of solid food per day), with as much vegetables as they can eat with their meals, or if no vegetables, an extra allowance of 6 oz. of bread at each meal.

"2d. A person able to work, and doing work, is allowed as much meat as he can eat once a day, and occasionally 1s. to get some other little comforts; persons working, and earning money, are allowed 2d. out of every 1s. they earn.

"3d. All paupers are required to be in the house by 7 o'clock the winter half year, and at 9 o'clock in the summer half year.

"4th. Their diet is either beef or mutton for dinner on Sundays, with suet puddings. The meat makes broth, to last them for breakfast two or three mornings.

"13 Nov. 1832.

Charles Roberts, Assistant Overseer."

Mr. Terry subsequently adduced the following instances of the effect produced upon the labourers by the change of system:

"1. Elijah Wheeler, a man with a large family, who, prior to the adoption of the present system of management of the poor laws, received constant and very considerable relief; but he has now provided himself with a horse and cart, and has taken up the business of common carrier from the town of Reading to Upton Gray, in Hampshire, and he resides now at the latter place, and lives in credit without any parochial relief.—2. John King was also a great and constant weight on the poor-rates; he has now quite provided for himself and a large family independently of the parish. He has now a horse and cart, deals in coals, and keeps a beer-shop.—3. William Oakley was a very bad character, and a heavy burden on the poor-rates, and almost always out of work, but he now keeps steady to his work, and has no relief for himself or family. Besides these, there are many cases of great improvement within the parish." For a further account of the dispauperised population of the parish, see the letter of Mr. Russell, *post*.

With respect to the general condition of the labourers, Mr. Roberts stated—

"That the labourer was never paid better for his labour than at the present time. If his wages are carefully laid out, he has the same opportunity as before, by leaving a trifle weekly in his master's hands throughout the year, to provide a fat hog at Christmas, instead of going to the shopkeeper for bacon by the pound, at a loss of 30 per cent. It is the same with respect to the labourers baking their own bread; they can, at the present time, buy at the mills a good strong third flour at 6s. 8d. per bushel, and the best seconds at 9s. 4d., which would incur a saving of full 20 per cent. to them, besides having an article without adulteration. I recollect when the labourer never could get his bacon too fat, and would consider it a great thing to have butcher's meat more than four or five times a year, but now it is a common practice for him to have a joint most Sundays. If the shopkeeper has very fat bacon, he is obliged to sell the fat part at reduced price; this part years ago would sell at 1d. per pound more than any other part."

I examined Mr. Russell, the magistrate, at some length on his experience and observation of the administration of the poor laws; but I considered it desirable that he should himself put to paper his answers in whatever form he deemed the best; and he has accordingly transmitted to me his evidence in the shape of replies to the queries of the Central Board.

I shall merely add here, that he attributed the circumstance of the parish officers stopping short, without abolishing the bread-money system, to the terror created by the practice of incendiarism which at that time began to prevail in the rural districts.

SWALLOWFIELD.—Of this parish, about two-thirds are in the county of Wilts, and one-third in Berks. The two portions of the parish, though they have only one church, have distinct parochial establishments; they are rated separately, and in all matters relating to their

respective poor, are as distinct and independent of one another as if they did not bear the same name. All the following Answers from H. RUSSELL, Esq. J. P. refer exclusively to that portion of the parish which lies in the county of Berks.

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QUESTIONS and ANSWERS.

1. NUMBER of Acres in your parish or township?

About 1,600.

2. How much Common? How much Woodland? How much Arable? How much Pasture?

No Common; about 100 acres of Woodland; 1,100 Arable; and 400 Pasture.

3. Are there many or few Landowners in your parish, and are the Farms large or small?

There are about 1,600 acres in the parish. One proprietor owns 1,200; two others may have 300 between them; and the rest is divided among a number of small owners. The farms are small: the largest consists of only 200 acres, and some are under 50.

4. Number of Labourers sufficient for the proper cultivation of the Land?

Supposing the different descriptions of land—arable, pasture and coppice—to be distributed in the average proportion, six men and two boys may be considered as the number required for the proper cultivation of 200 acres all the year round, with additional assistance at harvest. This is the smallest number that our opulent farmers do maintain, and the number that all would maintain if they could afford it. To do justice to the land, our whole 1,600 acres therefore require constantly 48 men and 16 boys; and in harvest we require at least 50 additional men.

5. Number of Agricultural Labourers in your parish?

The following has been the Population, of this parish at the four periods at which returns have been made: 1801, 361—1811, 365—1821, 347*—1831, 390. Of the present population, 68 are agricultural labourers above the age of 14. Our numbers, therefore, are barely sufficient for the cultivation of our land; and in harvest we are obliged to employ non-parishioners. In June many of our best labourers go "*upwards*," as they call it, to mow in the neighbourhood of London, where they are paid at the rate of perhaps 5s. an acre, instead of the 3s. they would have at home; and the consequence is, that we are generally in want of hands to get in our hay.

* In the return for this year I suspect there must have been an error.—H. R.

6. Number of Labourers generally out of employment, and how maintained in summer and in winter?

About 20 generally in Winter, and five or six perhaps in that part of Summer which is not occupied by either of the harvests. Most of that number have been maintained for the last five years by a gentleman residing in the parish, who employs them in trenching, planting, and making other improvements on his estate. Some are employed on the road and in the gravel-pit; and for a few there is work all the year round on 10 acres of land which belongs to the parish, and is cultivated on the parish account. No labourer is now ever without work of some kind or other. The fact of a larger number of labourers being out of employment in Winter than in Summer is of itself a proof of something being wrong. When farmers are prosperous, and can afford to do justice to their land and to themselves, there is throughout the Winter full employment in threshing, ploughing, hedging, ditching, coppicing and draining for as many hands as are required for the harvest in the Summer.

7. How many Non-parishioners have you in general, distinguishing Irish and Scotch?

About 20; no Irish or Scotch.

8. Weekly Wages, with and without beer or cyder, in summer and in winter?

Wages of an agricultural labourer.

In hay-harvest, we pay from 2s. 6d. to 4s. an acre for mowing, according to the weight of the crop, besides a quart of ale and a quart of small beer a day: a good mower will mow from 1 acre to 1½ a day. In corn-harvest, we pay from 10s. to 14s. an acre, without beer, for reaping wheat; a good reaper will reap an acre in two days, and a very stout active woman in three. At wheat-cart we pay the men 2s. 6d. a day, besides beer; and the women 1s. a day for raking oats and barley. For setting and cutting beans, which are chiefly done by women, we pay 8d. for every peck of seed set, and generally 5s. 6d. an acre for cutting. A good workwoman will earn 1s. 4d. a day at setting, and 1s. 6d. at cutting. For threshing we pay usually 4s. a quarter for wheat, 2s. for barley, 1s. 6d. for oats, and 1s. 3d. for beans; a good thresher will earn from 2s. to 2s. 6d. a day. In the winter, at coppicing, draining, trenching, hedging and ditching, a good workman will earn from 12s. to 15s. a week. For throwing mud out of the streams, and other water work, we pay 11s. or 12s. a week. A ploughman or carter has 11s. or 12s. a week, and a guinea over in harvest month. A boy of 14 or 15, with the team, has 5s. a week, and 3l. at Michaelmas. The ordinary wages of a man at day-work, are 10s. a week in summer, and 9s. in winter. A woman has 8d. a day; boys of 15 or 16, 1s. a day; and younger boys from 3d. to 6d.; young girls have 6d. a day.

9. Is Piece-work general in your neighbourhood?

It is, and is preferred to day-work by both employers and labourers.

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10. What in the whole might an *average* Labourer, obtaining an *average* amount of employment both in day-work and piece-work, expect to earn in the year, including harvest work and the value of all his other advantages and means of living, except parish relief?

(You will observe that this question refers to an *average* labourer obtaining an *average* amount of employment, not to the best labourer in constant employment.)

The following Statement shows the actual earnings of a labourer in this parish, from Michaelmas 1831 to Michaelmas 1832, carefully extracted from the books of his employer:—

	£.	s.	d.
Threshing 50 quarters 2 bushels Wheat, at 4 s. per quarter - -	10	1	-
Ditto 49 quarters 7 bushels Barley, at 2 s. - ditto - -	4	19	9
Ditto 42 quarters 3 bushels Oats, at 1 s. 6d. ditto - -	3	3	9
Ditto 19 quarters 2½ bushels Peas, at 1 s. 8d. ditto - -	1	12	3½
Ditto 51 quarters 6 bushels Beans, at 1 s. 3d. ditto - -	3	4	8
Trussing 3 Loads of Straw - - - - -	-	3	-
Reaping 1 A. 3 R. 17 P. Wheat - - - - -	1	1	2
Liming Wheat, 18 mornings, before working-time, at 3 d. - -	-	4	6
Day-work: 1 week 2 days in harvest, at 15 s. - - - - -	1	-	-
Ditto - 2 weeks - - ditto - - 12 s. - - - - -	1	4	-
Ditto - 17 weeks 1½ day, at 10 s. per week - - - - -	8	12	6
Throwing Mud, 1 week - - - - -	-	11	2
	£.	35	17 9½

Of this, 16 l. 19 s. 9½ d. was earned during the six summer months, from 1st May to 31st October; and 18 l. 18 s. during the six winter months: average of the whole year round, 13 s. 10 d. a week. There is nothing conjectural in either the details or the amount of this statement: the only question is, whether the man to whom it relates can be considered as an *average* labourer. Strength, skill and conduct, are the three qualities by which a labourer must be estimated. In point of strength and skill, he is decidedly below the average: he cannot mow; he earned only 3 l. 5 s. 2 d. at wheat harvest, and during the winter he did no hedging, ditching or draining, the descriptions of winter work that require the greatest skill, and are paid at the highest rate. His principal earnings were in threshing, a work which every ordinary labourer can perform, and with which even the poorest farmer cannot dispense. His advantage consists in his conduct, in his diligence and sobriety, qualities which are at the command of every man. A man cannot command strength; he cannot always acquire skill; but every man who chooses may be diligent and sober. It is owing to this that he met with no interruption from sickness or want of work, and that I have been able to obtain an accurate account of his earnings. An ordinary workman, of respectable character and regular habits, need never be out of work; and if he be not of that description, he will not continue long enough with one employer to admit of his earnings being accurately ascertained. This very morning I was inquiring after a labourer, one of the best, though by no means one of the most respectable in the parish, and I found that he is earning, and has been for some time past, 15 s. a week at threshing.

11. Have you any and what Employment for Women and Children?

Vide Answers to Questions 8 & 12.

12. What can Women, and Children under 16, earn per week, in summer, winter, and harvest, and how employed?

Earnings for women
and children.

In summer, a woman can earn 4 s. a week at hoeing, weeding and couching, and the same at hay-making. In corn harvest, 6 s. a week at raking barley and oats; from 12 s. to 18 s. a week at reaping; and 8 s. or 9 s. at cutting beans. In winter there is hardly any out-of-door work for women until February, when they can earn 7 s. or 8 s. a week at setting beans. In the course of the year, if she is industrious, she will earn perhaps 10 s. or 12 s. at washing, and 1 l. at needle-work. Boys from 14 to 16, will earn 5 s. a week, and 3 l. over at the end of the year, with the teams; and at ordinary day-work 7 s. a week; younger boys will earn from 1 s. 6d. to 3 s. a week, at weeding, picking stones, and driving the birds from the newly sown fields. Girls may earn 6 d. a day with their mothers, at field-work; and some, though few, will earn a little at their needle.

13. What in the whole might his Wife and four Children, aged 14, 11, 8 and 5 years respectively, (the eldest a boy) expect to earn in the year? obtaining, as in the former case, an average amount of employment.

The wife, supposing her to be an industrious woman, might earn as follows:—

	£.	s.		£.	s.
3 weeks Bean-setting - - at 7 s.	1	1	In this Estimate I have supposed the wife to be 21 weeks without field-work. Her average through the year, is a fraction over 4 s. a week.		
20 weeks Couching, weeding, &c. at 4 s.	4	-		£.	s.
6 weeks Hay-making - - at 4 s.	1	4	Wife's yearly earnings brought up -	10	12
2 weeks Reaping Wheat - - at 15 s.	1	10	A boy of 14, might earn -	£. 7	-
2 weeks Cutting Beans - - at 7 s. 6d.	-	15	A girl of 11 - - - -	4	-
2 weeks Raking Oats and Barley at 6 s.	-	12	A boy of 8 - - - -	2	10
Needlework - - - - -	1	-	A child of 5 - - - -	-	-
Washing - - - - -	-	10	Children's yearly earnings -	13	10
			Yearly earnings of Wife and Children -	£.	24 2
Wife's yearly earnings - - £.	10	12			

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Appendix (A.)

In examining the condition of the poor, it is necessary to ascertain not only what their earnings actually are at present, but what they are compared with what they have been at other times. In 1795, the late Mr. Davies, Rector of Barkham in this county, and only four miles from this parish, published a pamphlet, intitled, "The Case of the Labourers in Husbandry stated and considered." In that pamphlet, among the results of his inquiries, Mr. Davies gives a table of the earnings and expenses of four different families, in 1787, which he says, he "wrote down at the time, just as he received them from each family respectively, guarding, as well as he could, against error and deception." I select the last family of the four, consisting of a man and his wife and three children, the eldest 4 years old, because it is the one that Mr. Davies states to be the best off, for the following three reasons:—1st, It was favoured in the article of meat; 2dly, It had credit enough to buy a sack of flour at a time; and 3dly, it had sufficient garden ground for planting a good patch of potatoes. Opposite to Mr. Davies's statement of expenses, I have set the prices of the same articles at the present time.

Comparison of the present with the former condition of the agricultural labourers.

EXPENSES:

In 1787:				In 1832:			
	s.	d.			s.	d.	
Bread or Flour, at 10d. per gallon	-	2	6	-	-	3	6
Yeast and Salt	-	-	2 ½	-	-	-	3
Bacon ⁽¹⁾	-	1	9	-	-	2	5
Tea ⁽²⁾	-	-	2 ¼	-	-	-	3 ¾
Sugar	-	-	8	-	-	-	7
Butter	-	-	4	-	-	-	5 ½
Cheese ⁽³⁾	-	-	2 ½	-	-	-	3 ¼
Beer ⁽⁴⁾	-	-	5	-	-	-	7
Soap, Starch, Blue ⁽⁵⁾	-	-	3	-	-	-	2
Candles ⁽⁶⁾	-	-	3	-	-	-	2
Thread thrum, Worsted	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Weekly	-	-	6 11 ¼	-	-	-	8 10 ½
Yearly	-	£. 18	- 9	-	-	-	£. 23 11 6

ANNUAL OUTGOINGS:

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Cottage	-	2	-	-	3	-	-
Fuel	-	10	-	-	1	5	-
Clothing	-	3	10	-	2	10	-
Lying-in	-	10	-	-	-	10	-
Casualties	-	10	-	-	-	15	-
	-	7	-	-	-	8	-
	£. 25	-	9	-	£. 31	11	6

(¹) The farmer, of whom they rent their dwelling, lets them have a fatted hog, weight about 14 score, (on condition of their not keeping any pigs or poultry,) at 1s. per score under the market price: this, at 6s. 6d. per score (1787), comes to 4l. 11s., and as it lasts the family the whole year, it is per week exactly 1s. 9d. In 1832, 9s. a score will be 1s. under the market price; and 14 score a year will come to 2s. 5d. a week.

(²) Quarter of a pound per month, at 3s. a pound, in 1787. In 1832, 5s. a pound.

(³) About 28 lbs. at 4 ½d. per lb. (1787) will be 10s. 6d. a year, or 2 ½d. a week. In 1832, the same quantity at 6d. per lb. will be 14s. a year, or 3 ¼d. a week.

(⁴) The wife having an infant at the breast, and fancying *very* small beer better than mere water, brews a peck of malt once a month, which costs 1s. 4d.; hops, ¼ lb. 4d.: this per week 5d. in 1787. In 1832, a peck of malt costs 2s., and ¼ lb. hops 4d., weekly 7d.

(⁵) Soap was 9d. per pound in 1787: it is now 5d.

(⁶) Candles were 9d. per pound in 1787: they are now 6d.

In the following statement of the earnings, I have pursued the same comparison. Mr. Davies puts the man's earnings at 8s. 4d. a week, though in the same table he states the average of the year to be only 8s. To be sure of being within the mark, I put the man's earnings at 1s. 10d. a week, and the woman's at 1s. a week, below the average of the foregoing statements. There is no doubt that any ordinary couple, if they be but sober, steady and industrious, may command at least 12s. and 3s. a week respectively all the year round. The children are too young to earn any thing.

EARNINGS:

In 1787.				In 1832.			
	s.	d.		s.	d.		
Man	-	8	4	-	12	-	
Woman	-	-	8	-	3	-	
Weekly	-	9	-	-	15	-	
Yearly	-	£. 23	8	-	£. 39	-	-

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According to this statement, the expenses of the family have increased only 25 per cent. while their earnings have increased 60 per cent. In 1787 the earnings of the family were 2*l.* less, and in 1832 they are 7*l.* more, than the expenses. Mr. Davies does not state how much the poor-rate was in the pound in his parish at the time he wrote, but he speaks of "the vast increase of the poor-rate;" and again, of "the rapid progress of the poor-rate, from one million, to two between the years 1753 and 1786." The earliest year for which any record of the poor-rate has been preserved in this parish is 1788. The amount of it was then precisely the same as in the year ending at Lady-day 1832; viz. 3*s.* 4*d.* in the pound on the rack-rent. Mr. Davies, in describing the labouring families of his parish, says, "I could not but observe with concern their mean and distressed condition; I found them in general but indifferently fed, badly clothed; some children without shoes and stockings; very few put to school; and most families in debt to the little shopkeepers. There was scarcely any appearance of comfort about their dwellings." Except that few of the children are now put to school, and that many improvident families are, as such families always will be, in debt to the shopkeepers, such a description is by no means applicable to the present condition of the poor. I am assured by Mr. Terry, a very intelligent gentleman, who for the last 25 years has been extensively engaged both as a miller and as a farmer in this and the adjoining parish, that he never remembers the poor to have been so well off as they are now.

14. Could the Family subsist on these Earnings? And if so, on what food?

In my answers to Queries 10 and 13, I have stated the man's earnings at 13*s.* 10*d.* a week, and the woman's and children's at 4*s.* and 5*s.* respectively. Not to exceed the mark, I have, in the preceding answer, put the man's at 12*s.* and the woman's at 3*s.*: take the children's also at 4*s.*; and the earnings of the whole family will be 19*s.* a week, or 49*l.* 8*s.* a year. With this, the family could subsist abundantly, on bread, cheese, butter, coarse meat, bacon, garden stuff, tea, coffee, milk, and sometimes beer.

15. Could it lay by any thing? and how much?

Means of accumu-
lation.

With care and temperance, I should say it might lay by from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year; but, on such a question it is impossible to frame an estimate that shall be applicable to many families. Much will depend on the habits of the wife, and still more on those of her husband. Where it is found that upon any given income some families can live, we may be assured that upon the same income others can lay by. In most families the husband will contrive to spend something every week at the beer-house, and whatever he spends there, he might lay by if he chose. I fear, however, that, among the labourers, especially those who are married, the number of those that do lay by is very small; besides the power, there must be some inducement, and I apprehend that, in many instances, that inducement is weakened by the provision which imposes upon the different members of a family the obligation of supporting one another. It seems unnatural to raise a question upon the duty of the father to maintain his son, or the son his father, if he has the ability to do so; yet the expediency of a law must be determined, not by the abstract justness of the obligation which it is intended to enforce, but by the practical consequences of which it is found to be productive. The best meant laws, especially among the poor laws, are by no means the most useful. As a general rule, one would hope that both the parent and the child would fulfil their duty of their own accord; though the hardships and necessities to which the lower orders are exposed, act as severe restraints upon the charities of life. The operation of this law falls most heavily upon those, who, from their previous habits, have the best title to protection. The profligate father is out of the reach of any order to contribute towards the support of a profligate son; his vices constitute his exemption; but upon the frugal parent the law visits the excesses of a dissolute son, who has departed from his good example, and whose vices he has no power to restrain. Every individual should be made to rely upon his own conduct and exertions. It is an encouragement to vice to tell the son, that, be his life as dissolute as it may, his father will be compelled to maintain him; and it is a discouragement to frugality to tell the parent that, however hardly he may work and fare, the fruits of his diligence and sobriety are liable to be devoured by the prodigality of his son. In a number of cases, I am satisfied that persons, who otherwise would lay by, are deterred from doing so by the apprehension that a dissolute descendant may take from them, in their old age, the accumulated savings of their whole life. It is a common saying among the labourers, that it is of no use for them to lay by, when an order may be made to take away their pittance. They think they may as well look to the parish at once, as be driven to it in the end by the profligacy of another person. They therefore spend what they can upon their immediate wants, rather than run the risk of its being squandered upon the vices of others. Of those who do lay by, it appears by the deposits made in the savings bank from this neighbourhood, that a great majority are single men, and that their savings have generally originated in a sum having been left or given to them, which they have been prudent enough to lay by, and which has then constituted an inducement to them to continue to add something out of their subsequent earnings. It, therefore, deserves consideration, whether some amendment cannot be made in a law, which imposes upon the frugal, that penalty from which it discharges the dissolute, and discourages those habits of forethought and prudence, which it ought to be our first object to promote. Having had occasion to mention the beer-houses, I must not omit to say that I look upon them, and I believe they are generally looked upon, as having already done, and as still continuing to do, more than any other cause, towards the impoverishment and depravation of the labourer. Before the passing of the Beer Act, we had one public-house in this parish; we have since had four additional beer-houses. As we are not situated on any high road, most of the beer drunk in those five houses is drunk by our own parishioners. Is it possible that a population of only 390 persons, of both sexes and all ages, should consume, without the grossest excess and the most lavish prodigality, a quantity of beer of which the sale shall support five houses? The design of the Beer Act was to take cheap beer to the labourers' houses; the effect has been to take the labourers to the beer-houses. Those houses are kept generally by persons of the worst character; they are the resort of thieves, poachers, gamblers and prostitutes, and no man that frequents them can escape contagion of some sort or other. He squanders his money, wastes his health, ruins his character, and is lucky if he is not found at last in the path that leads to the gallows. Until the establishment of the beer-houses, I do not remember having had a single complaint from

a wife

Discouragements
to accumulation.Beer-houses,
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a wife against her husband; I have since had many, and all to the same effect. The children are naked and starving, as the husband has spent at the beer-house the money that he used to give the wife to clothe and feed them. When the Act was first passed, a widow of this place, who had always borne an irreproachable character, and had by honest industry kept herself and her children from the parish, applied to me to get her rated, that she might open a beer-house. I dissuaded her from her purpose, but she urged her previous conduct and the necessity of her children; I consented; and what has been the consequence? She has been heavily fined by the Bench for contravening the Act; she has been ejected by her landlord for keeping a disorderly house, and she has had a bastard child. Every person frequenting a beer-house should be held to have forfeited, for the time, his claim to parish relief. The parish ought not to be burdened with the charge of making good that deficiency in his means of supporting his family, which he has wilfully occasioned by his own prodigality and drunkenness.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
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BERKS.

16. What class of persons are generally the Owners of Cottages?

There are 63 cottages in this parish, of which nine belong to the principal proprietor, who is also lord of the manor; 18 belong to one, and six to the other, of the only two other proprietors of any extent; seven are occupied by their owners; two belong to the parish; four belong to non-residents; and the owners of the remaining 17 are persons of low station, who have built or purchased them exclusively for profit.

17. Are there many cases in your parish where the Labourer owns his Cottage?
Seven.

18. The Rent of Cottages?

The best cottages are those that are occupied by their owners. The highest rent paid by a tenant is 6*l.* 16*s.* a year; the lowest is 1*l.* 18*s.* The average rent of the whole is 4*l.* 2*s.*

19. Whether Gardens to the Cottages?

Only two of the cottages are without gardens. The largest garden is 100 poles; the smallest is five poles. The average size of all the gardens is 20 poles. In this parish the cottages are, several of them, large and substantial, but many are let for more than they are worth, and most of them for more than the occupiers can afford. At the present rate of agricultural wages, I should say that 2*l.* 10*s.* is the utmost a labourer ought to pay for his cottage. Cottages therefore are here a burden upon the poor, as they are every where a burden upon the community. Every man that builds a cottage, begets a race of paupers; and every man that builds a nest of cottages, breeds a gang of thieves. In two instances in this parish, needy persons have built, one five and the other seven cottages, upon patches of ground, neither of them exceeding one acre. Some restriction ought to be put upon the practice; cottages should all be rated, and the rates levied on the owners.

20. Whether any Land let to Labourers; if so, the Quantity to each, and at what Rent?

No land is separately let to any of the labourers. Nine of the 63 cottages have, besides their gardens, allotments of land called here "*pightles*," the largest measuring three acres, and the smallest 30 poles. The yearly rent of the cottage, with the largest pightle and a garden of 25 poles, is 6*l.*; the rent of that with the smallest pightle and a garden of 10 poles, is 4*l.* 4*s.* Allotments of land are certainly advantageous to the labourers themselves, if they are industrious; but they do ultimate mischief, unless they are restricted to a quantity, that the labourer and his family can themselves cultivate in those occasional hours, which would otherwise be lost. If the allotments are so large as to require extra labour to be hired for their cultivation, the result will be a cottier system. In general a quarter of an acre will be sufficient for an ordinary family. A gentleman who occupies a farm in the parish of Cookham, in this county, has for several years pursued the practice of allotting, rent-free, to every one of his labourers who has passed the year without parish relief, a portion of ground sufficient to grow potatoes for the consumption of his family. But I think it is better that a fair rent should be taken, and that, to avoid the suspicion of interested motives, no conditions should be imposed other than those which are customary between landlord and tenant.

Allotments; under
what circumstances
advantageous.

21. Are Cottages frequently exempted from Rates? and is their Rent often paid by the Parish?

We never rate a cottage unless it has an acre or more of land annexed to it. The rent is never paid by the parish.

22. Have you a Workhouse? State the number, age and sex of its Inmates.

We have. By the regulations of our Select Vestry, the inmates of the workhouse are divided into two classes; the first comprising the aged, sick, infirm, and children too young to work; and the second, able-bodied persons of both sexes. To the first class we allow an abundant supply of nutritious food; to the second, who are all in fact idlers, we allow only a limited quantity of the plainest fare. When we first established our Select Vestry, we had in the workhouse sometimes 18 or 19 in the first, and four or five in the second class. During the last two years and a half, we have never had a single pauper in the second class; and generally seven, eight or nine, and only once 11 in the first; at present we have 10—three old men, aged, one 81, and two 76; one cripple, aged 48; three old women, aged 75, 71, and 67; one young woman aged 24, weak in mind; and two orphans, a girl aged 16, and a boy aged 12.

23. What number of Individuals received Relief last week, not being in the Workhouse?

Thirty; viz. Four old men; seven old women; one able-bodied man, sick; two able-bodied women, sick; and 16 children too young to work. The sum paid to the whole was 1*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*

P. L. (A.)—III.

G

24. Have

Appendix (A.)

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Bread money.

24. Have you any and how many able-bodied Labourers in the employment of individuals, receiving Allowance or regular Relief from your Parish on their own account or on that of their families?

Yes. The parish give the labourers, out of the poor-rates, what they call sometimes their "*make up*," and sometimes their "*bread money*." This pernicious practice had its origin in an Order made by the Berkshire Magistrates, at Newbury, in 1795, and still prevails, I believe, throughout the county. The *bread money* is calculated weekly at the price of two gallon loaves for the husband, one for the wife, and one for each of the children, be the number what it may; and to whatever extent the earnings of the family may fall short of that sum, the difference is *made up* in money. In the Berkshire portion of this parish (Swallowfield), the invariable usage, both in winter and in summer, was to make up the bread-money from the *actual* earnings of the whole family. In the Wiltshire portion, they take the man's earnings, let them have been as high as they may, at the fixed rate of day work only, allowing him the benefit of the difference; and, under the influence of the panic struck by the fires, our portion has so far yielded to the importunity of the farmers, as to adopt this practice during the winter months. For instance, if a family consist of a man, his wife and six children, their bread-money for nine loaves, at 1 s. 6 d. a loaf, is 13 s. 6 d. a week. Suppose, as often happens in the winter, that the man has earned 12 s. in the week, and the wife and children nothing, then, according to the rule which used to prevail with us all the year round, and which still prevails in summer, the family will receive a *make up* of 1 s. 6 d.; but, according to the practice which we now follow in the winter, the man's earnings, though really 12 s. will be taken at the ordinary rate of only 9 s. and he will receive 4 s. 6 d. in money. Whatever the wife and any of the children may earn, whether in summer or in winter, their real earnings are taken as a set-off against their loaf. In our vestry, which meets every other Monday, the calculation is confined to the earnings of the past fortnight. No further retrospect is ever taken, either for or against the claimant. In some parishes, I believe, the account is settled once a week, instead of once a fortnight. Under this system, the facility of obtaining relief from the parish takes away the inducement which the labourers would otherwise have, both to find employment, and to make the most of it. A diligent pursuit will often devise work, which would otherwise remain unthought of or undone. Many important discoveries in art, science and manufacture, owe their origin to the necessity by which men in all classes of life are urged on to explore ampler means of providing for their families than those which lie upon the surface.

25. Is Relief or Allowance given according to any, and what scale?

Vide answer to the foregoing question.

26. Is any and what attention paid to the Character of the Applicant, or to the causes of his distress?

No attention is paid to either the character of the applicant, or the causes of his distress. In fact, he is considered entitled to it without pleading any distress. In other applications for relief, arising out of sickness, or suffering of any kind, we in our vestry are always guided in our decision by the character of the applicant, and the particular circumstances that may have led to his difficulty.

27. Whether the system of Roundsmen is practised, or has been practised?

No; neither now nor at any former time.

28. Whether Labourers are apportioned amongst the Occupiers according to the extent of occupation, acreage, rent, or number of horses employed?

No.

29. Whether any distinction is made in Wages paid by their employers to Married and Single Men, when employed by individuals?

No; except that, as the best workmen are generally married, they have, on that account, the higher wages. Skill and strength being equal, no difference is made when they are employed by individuals. When they are employed by the parish there is a difference, their work being allotted to them at such rates as to enable a married man to earn 9 s. where a single man could earn only 6 s.

30. What are your Rates per pound by the year, at rack-rent, or how estimated?

At Lady-day last, 3 s. 4 d. on the rack-rent. The parochial assessment on which the rates are levied, is about 2-3ds of the rack-rent.

31. Have they increased or diminished during the last year, compared with the preceding?

Diminished 2 s. 4 d. in the pound. The lowest rate in this parish, during the last 50 years, was that for the year 1791-2, which was 2 s. 8 d. in the pound on the rack-rent. The highest was in 1812-13, which was 10 s. on the rack-rent. The average rate for the last 20 years, has been 6 s. 8 d. on the rack-rent, exactly double the rate of last year.

32. Have you a Select Vestry and Assistant Overseer; and what has been the effect?

Yes; it was established at Lady-day 1829. We have also a paid officer, who acts as assistant overseer, but we have not given him a formal appointment, to save the expense of the stamp. When a new Act is passed, the appointment of an assistant overseer ought to be exempted from the necessity of a stamp. The effects of our select vestry have been very beneficial; single men receive better wages; there are fewer able-bodied applicants for relief; the number of bastards and improvident

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provident marriages has been reduced; both the extent and the severity of pauperism have been lessened; the condition of the poor has been generally improved; and the amount of the rates essentially diminished. The average of the rate, for the three years before the establishment of our select vestry, was 6 s. 1 d. in the pound; that for the three years following it, has been only 5 s. 3 d. The following are the particulars:

			s.	d.				s.	d.
1826-7	-	-	6	8	1829-30	-	-	6	8
1827-8	-	-	6	-	1830-31	-	-	5	8
1828-9	-	-	5	8	1831-32	-	-	3	4

By this statement it appears, that our rate was 1 s. in the pound more in the year after the establishment of the select vestry than it had been in the year before; but this increase arose from causes quite independent of the charge of managing the poor. We were put to an expense of 70 l. in law charges, chiefly in consequence of an attempt made by a neighbouring magistrate to thwart our proceedings; and owing to the interference of the same magistrate, on the establishment of our vestry, we have ever since had an extra charge of 40 l. a year for the maintenance of a pauper lunatic in the Asylum at Hoxton; sums which are important in our small parish, where a shilling rate on the rack-rent produces only 45 l. The amount expended by us for the relief of the poor in the year after the establishment of our select vestry, was 550 l. 6 s. 8 d.; that in the year preceding was 577 l. 13 s. 8 d. The Wiltshire portion of the parish were so much struck with the benefits they saw us derive, that they followed our example, and established a select vestry for the management of their own poor.

33. Who decides, in your Parish, how much Money shall be raised in each year, or in each period less than a year, for the Relief of the Poor?

The select vestry.

34. Who decides how much of that Amount shall be paid by each Rate-payer?

No such discretion is exercised by any body in this parish. Each rate-payer pays his proportion upon the amount at which his property is assessed in the rate-book. The assessment is of a date too old to be now traced. Upon land, which constitutes the great bulk of the rateable property in this parish, the assessment is about two-thirds of the present rack-rent. Whenever a question arises upon the assessment of any particular property, it is decided by the select vestry.

35. If both the Overseers and the Vestry take part in deciding all or any of these matters, state the manner or degree in which they respectively interfere?

The accounts of the assistant overseer are examined and passed by the select vestry once a month. Whenever the balance remaining in his hands is reduced too low to meet the coming demands upon him, a new rate is ordered by the select vestry to be made. It is the usage of the parish to make all rates for the relief of the poor at 2 s. in the pound on the assessment, unless the close of the year be near at hand, and it is thought that a smaller one will last till the making up of the accounts at that period. Under these circumstances the select vestry has occasionally ordered a 1 s. 6 d., occasionally a 1 s., and sometimes even a 6 d. rate. I never remember a larger rate than 2 s.

36. Is the amount of Agricultural Capital in your neighbourhood increasing or diminishing? And do you attribute such increase or diminution to any cause connected with the administration of the Poor Laws?

Certainly diminishing; but far from attributing that diminution to any cause connected with the administration of the Poor Laws, I should reverse the order of cause and effect, and say that it was the diminution of agricultural capital that had aggravated the burden of the Poor Laws. The poor are driven to the parish, not because they are more in number than the land requires, but because they are more than the farmer, with his present capital, can afford to employ. Those farmers that employ the most hands are the most thriving. In this neighbourhood the farms are small; the occupiers of them are always from hand to mouth, and, from want of capital, their stock is so insufficient, and their cultivation so imperfect, that the land does not yield more than half the produce it is capable of yielding. Of the different agricultural classes, the large farmers and the labourers are the best off; the pressure is most severe upon the middle class of small farmers, many of whom are actually tottering between the payment and receipt of poor's rate. Supposing the land in this neighbourhood to be a fair sample of that in other parts, I only repeat the opinion of the best informed and most intelligent persons, when I say, that, if the farmers had the command of a sufficient capital to stock and cultivate their lands well, this would be an exporting instead of an importing county.

37. Is the industry of the Labourers in your neighbourhood supposed to be increasing or diminishing; that is, are your Labourers supposed to be better or worse workmen than they formerly were?

The labourers are considered not to work so hard as they formerly did; but, in point of ingenuity and neatness, to be better workmen than they were.

38. Do the Labourers in your neighbourhood change their services more frequently than formerly? and how do you account for that circumstance?

They do, and are consequently worse servants. The reason is, that the farmers, in order to avoid making parishioners, are much more cautious than they used to be in hiring servants; and if a servant has not already a settlement in the parish in which he is hired, his hiring seldom extends to the whole year.

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39. Can you state the particulars of any attempt which has been made in your neighbourhood to discontinue the system (after it has once prevailed) of giving to able-bodied Labourers in the employ of individuals parish allowance on their own account, or on that of their families?

I have never heard of any such attempt having been made.

40. What do you think would be the effects, both immediate and ultimate, of an enactment forbidding such allowance, and thus throwing wholly on parish employment all those whose earnings could not fully support themselves and their Families?

The "bread-money" is hardly looked upon by the labourers in the light of parish relief. They consider it as much their right as the wages they receive from their employers, and in their own minds make a wide distinction between "taking their *bread-money*," and going on the parish. The immediate effect of putting a stop to that allowance would be to occasion distress in many families; and at this particular time, the suffering and vengeance of individuals would probably show themselves in an increased number of those fires, in which the angry feelings of the poor now unhappily find vent. After a time, as the farmers would be deprived by the change of some of their best workmen, they would probably find it worth their while to take them back at wages proportioned to their skill, and by providing work for their wives and children also, would contrive to make the earnings of the family adequate to their support without any allowance from the parish. In the end, if the difficulties and danger of the process were once surmounted, the consequence, I have no doubt, would be the diminution of improvident marriages, and a general improvement in the character and habits of the labourers. It is surprising, that the necessary effect of this practice should not have been foreseen from the beginning. It strikes inevitably at the root of every thing like frugality and providence. It tells a man, little calculated to resist temptation, that, let him squander what he will in the passing fortnight, he may depend upon the parish for the fortnight that is to come. A few days ago, a woman came to me to beg a little skimmed milk for a daughter, who had been sent home from service with the small-pox, and for whom, she assured me, she had not a farthing to buy a morsel of the poorest food. Yet this woman's husband was in full work through both the harvests; and, during all the rest of the year, for some years past, when he has had nothing better to do, he has been employed by me, as he still is, at 12s. a week. Of three sons who live with him, two also have been working for me, the eldest at 8s. and the second at 6s.; the third only being too young to earn any thing. To maintain himself, his wife, and these three boys, this man, therefore has had often more, and never less, than 26s. a week, and he has a cottage rent free for his life. But for the most dissolute prodigality, he might have laid by a store that would by this time have been considerable: but his earnings, and those of his children, as fast as he has received them, have been squandered at the beer-shop, under the assurance that, even if any accident befel him, he had an infallible resource in his bread-money. In other classes of life, men suffer for their own misconduct; but for the vices of the labourer the parish must do penance. To see the way in which claims of this kind are sometimes enforced upon a parish, one would suppose that the parochial funds are inexhaustible, and that they are raised without cost or suffering. It is forgotten how hardly they are wrung from, perhaps, the most suffering class in the community. Many a payer of rates in this parish works and fares much harder than those by whom they are received.

41. Do you know of any cases in which the clause of Mr. Sturges Bourne's Act (59 Geo. III. c. 12. s. 29,) enabling relief to be made by way of loan, has been acted on?

We often afford relief in the way of loan; sometimes in cases of sickness where the distress of the applicant is temporary; but generally in those where the husband, as in hay harvest, leaves the parish in search of more lucrative employment, and his family would otherwise be without the means of support during his absence. We sometimes make a loan, especially in the case of a non-resident parishioner, not expecting it to be repaid, but, as the Vicar of Wakefield used to lend a coat, in the hope that the borrower will not repeat his application. Where we have made loans, with the expectation that they would be repaid, we have seldom been disappointed; I think it a very useful practice.

42. Would it be advisable that the parish, instead of giving allowance to the Father, should take charge of, employ, and feed his Children during the day? and if such a practice has prevailed, has it increased or diminished the number of able-bodied applicants for relief?

This was one of the experiments we tried on the establishment of our select vestry; but it excited so much discontent in the poor, and occasioned so many complaints to the bench, that, especially as some of the magistrates disapproved of it, we relinquished the attempt, rather than be engaged in perpetual litigation. As part of a general system, intended to oblige the father to rely more upon his own industry and frugality, and less upon help from the parish, the measure I think would be advisable; but a lasting, or even a prolonged, separation between parents and children, especially while the children are young, and any weakening of the tie that binds them together, are so prejudicial, that, as a single measure, I should not recommend it. In the present temper of the peasantry, the attempt would probably produce the same manifestation of resentment that I have contemplated in my Answer to the preceding Query.

43. Is that relief or allowance generally given in consequence of the advice or order of the Magistrates? or under the opinion that the Magistrates would make an order for it if application were made to them?

This allowance, called "*bread-money*" or "*make up*," is given in compliance with an order made many years ago by the magistrates of this county; and, practically, is in many divisions enforced by them. I have known a magistrate, on an application made by a pauper for his "*bread-money*," exclaim, that no such thing as "*bread-money*" was recognized by the Bench; and then make an order, with the mere omission of the term, for the precise amount demanded.

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44. What do you think would be the effect, immediate and ultimate, of making the decision of the Vestry or Select Vestry in matters of relief final?

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From what I have seen of the select vestry, which has now been established in this parish for three years and a half, I think very highly of its conduct and character; of the readiness of its member to adopt any measure for the benefit of the parish; of their disinterestedness, liberality and justice, and of the effects of their proceedings, both in improving the condition of the poor, and reducing the expenses of the parish. Hardly any question can arise, on which some one of the various members of a vestry is not qualified to furnish useful information; and the mutual control which they exercise on one another, restrains that niggardliness, resentment and partiality, which generally prevail in small communities, and among persons of narrow circumstances. I believe, that when the leading inhabitants take an active share in the business, and encourage, by their example, the attention and diligence of their neighbours, a select vestry, with a paid assistant overseer, is the best implement that has yet been devised for the local administration of the Poor Laws. The vulgar objection against it is, that it takes the care of the poor out of the hands of those who, being nearer to them in condition, and more familiar with their wants and habits, are their natural friends and guardians, and places them at the mercy of the rich, who know and care little about their real circumstances, who have few feelings in common with them, and whose interest it is to confine the relief given to them within the narrowest possible limits. But the very reverse of all this is the fact: it is not the poor who are the natural friends of one another, or the rich who are naturally their enemies. The higher you ascend in the scale of society, the more sympathy you will find in the distresses of the poor. The gentry are those that treat them with the greatest liberality and indulgence; the large farmers are more kind to them than the small ones, and the hardest treatment is that which they deal to one another. It is not to the farmer, but to the gentleman, that they go with the narrative of their grievances. It has just happened in this parish, that a benefit society has suffered itself to be dissolved, rather than consent to do an act of bare justice to one of its own sick and distressed members. With this opinion of a select vestry, if the only alternative lay between increasing the powers of the vestry, and continuing those now exercised by the magistrates in matters of relief, I should certainly prefer making the decision of the vestry final. I have always thought it the cardinal error of the Select Vestry Act, that it leaves the deliberate judgment of the most respectable and intelligent inhabitants of a parish, conversant with the character of the claimant, as well as with the circumstances of his distress, subject to the caprice of any two irresponsible magistrates, strangers to the merits of the case, strangers to the character of the parties, and very often strangers to the true principles by which their decision ought to be guided. The discretionary power now vested in the hands of magistrates is one of the chief obstacles in the way of a salutary and uniform administration of the Poor Laws. Each individual magistrate has his own peculiar view of every case that comes before him. Some lean always to the parish, and some lean always to the pauper. Those who understand the law best, and take an active share in the business of their own parishes, are slow to interfere, without strong cause, in the concerns of others. Those who busy themselves most in the affairs of their neighbours, and to whom the poor chiefly resort with their complaints, are generally those who are the least fitted for the task. One has some whim or nostrum of his own; another is in search of popularity; another has a mistaken view of benevolence, and fancies himself the poor man's friend, because he helps the pauper to live in idleness. I do not mean to arraign the motives by which magistrates are actuated. I am a magistrate myself, and have, perhaps, my erroneous notions as well as my neighbours. The greatest harm is often done with the best intentions; a smattering of benevolence is quite as mischievous as a smattering of knowledge. When magistrates interfere in matters of relief, they decide wrongly, in four cases out of five; and even where their decision is not wrong in itself, they often deter the parish officers from doing right, by the apprehension that they will not be supported. Highly as I think, however, of a select vestry, I should be sorry to see its decision in matters of relief made final. The members, if there were no appeal from them, would act with less confidence, and would be more exposed to the vindictive feelings of the poor; nor would the poor themselves ever be satisfied, if their complaints were not to be heard by any authority beyond that of their own parish. But the appeal, instead of being left where it is, should be vested in responsible persons, conversant with the true principles of the Poor Laws, consistent in their own application of them, and capable of giving their undivided time and attention to their duty. I should like to see a distinct and uniform system established for the management of the poor in every parish, and an ambulatory Board appointed, of members unconnected with the district in which they are to act, to visit and inspect the different parishes in succession, to superintend and control the proceedings of the vestry or overseers, to examine and audit their accounts, and to receive and redress the complaints of the poor. The effects of such a measure would be to give us one sound efficient system, in place of the endless variety we now have of false or futile ones; to inspire the parochial officers with confidence and energy; to restrain favouritism and speculation; to secure the interests of the poor, upon principles conducive to their substantial welfare; to remove the invidious comparisons which they now make between their treatment in different parishes; and to afford them that satisfaction which they always derive from seeing that their complaints are listened to, even when the object of their application is not granted.

*Superior sympathy
of the rich with the
labouring men.*

45. If an appeal from the Vestry or Select Vestry shall continue, what do you think would be the effect, immediate and ultimate, of restoring the law as it stood before the Stat. 36 Geo. III. cap. 23, was passed, so that, in any parish having a workhouse or poor-house, the Magistrates should not have the power of ordering relief to be given to persons who should refuse to enter the workhouse or poor-house?

A small benefit is better than no benefit at all; and therefore if the right of appeal to magistrates, in questions of relief, cannot be taken away altogether, it may at least be beneficially contracted. The immediate effect of any interference with the right of appeal, would be certainly to create discontent among the poor; and the danger now is, that that discontent might show itself in fires, and frighten the vestries or parish officers from their duty; but if a law, withholding relief from any pauper who should refuse to go into a workhouse, could be steadily enforced for any time, the ultimate effect unquestionably would be to diminish the number of applicants. I must add, however, that my

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objection is confined to making the magistrates, as at present, the tribunal of appeal. I should be sorry to see the right of appeal in the poor abrogated altogether.

46. What do you think would be the effect of an Enactment enabling parishes to tax themselves, in order to facilitate Emigration?

I may perhaps be misled by judging generally of other parishes by what I see in this; but I confess I have always doubted whether the effects which we now witness among the agricultural population do not proceed rather from a diminution in the resources of the farmer, than an increase in the number of labourers. It remains to be proved that the country contains more hands than the land would beneficially employ. It may indeed be said that as long as any excess exists, the effect is the same, whether it arise from too little capital, or too many hands. But even emigration, without other subsidiary measures, is a palliative, not a cure; and the money that is spent in sending a part of our population to other countries, is thrown away, unless we provide, *at the same time*, what we have not provided yet, adequate measures to prevent the places which have been left from being rapidly supplied. We shall begin at the wrong end if we do not, in the order of remedies, make emigration occupy the second place, instead of the first.

47. What is the Allowance received by a Woman for a Bastard, and does it generally repay her, or more than repay her, the expense of keeping it? and is the existing law for the punishment of the Mother whose Bastard Child becomes chargeable often executed for the first or for the second offence?

The order on the father is generally for 2s. or 2s. 6d. a week. Up to four years old that sum more than repays the mother for keeping the child; from four to eight it barely supports it; and again after eight, when the child begins to work, especially if it be a boy, it more than repays her. The law for the punishment of the mother is never, I believe, enforced for the first offence, and not always for the second.

48. What number of Bastards have been chargeable to your parish? and what has been the expense occasioned by them during each of the last five years? and how much of that expense has been recovered from the putative Fathers? and how much from the Mothers?

YEARS.	Number of Bastards.	Expense to Parish.	Recovered from		Loss to Parish.
			Fathers.	Mothers.	
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
1827/8	5	34 5 4	18 10 -	- - 1 s. per week, which she however retains, if she nurses the child.	15 15 4
1828/9	6	38 9 6	27 12 -		10 17 6
1829/30	7	26 12 3	16 9 -		10 3 3
1830/31	5	18 3 7½	9 16 6		9 7 1½
1831/2	2	11 1 -	7 11 -		3 10 -
5 years	25	128 11 8½	79 18 6	- - -	49 13 2½

All the mothers, to whom the foregoing statement refers, have nursed and kept their children, and therefore no money has been recovered from them.

49. Can you suggest any and what change in the Laws respecting Bastardy?

Our present laws respecting bastardy are at variance with the common experience and practice of mankind. Instead of imposing the restraint where alone it can be efficacious, and visiting the violation of chastity upon the female, we inflict the penalty on the male, and make her prostitution a source of benefit to the female. The feelings of the people have followed the error of the law. The birth of a bastard child, having been made a source of profit, has ceased to be a source of shame. A girl in a country village is no longer thought the worse of for having had a bastard. It makes her richer in money, and, in no respect poorer in estimation. She is not the less likely to marry for having had one bastard; and, if she has more, they constitute a little fortune that is sure to get her a husband. Before any real good can be done, this process must be reversed. We must cease to rely on the influence of restraints upon the male, and make the interest, as well as the duty, of the female, to consist, not in the sacrifice, but in the preservation of her chastity. The sum which the putative father is ordered to pay is designed for the security of the parish as well as for the maintenance of the child, and ought, therefore, to be paid, not to the mother, but to the parish. A few years ago we adopted the practice of paying to the mother as much only of the allowance from the father as was absolutely necessary for the immediate support of the child, retaining the surplus towards a future provision for it, or towards indemnifying the parish, if it should become chargeable. The effect upon the mothers was precisely what we expected and desired it to be, and if we could have persevered in the practice, I have no doubt it would have been productive of very salutary consequences; but a question having arisen as to its legality, we were compelled reluctantly to abandon it. For the future, we have resolved to adopt the practice introduced by Mr. Lowe, at Bingham, of refusing to realize the amount of the order on the father, and enforcing the punishment of the mother, if she applies to the parish for relief.

50. Can you suggest any improvement in the mode of keeping and auditing and publishing Parish Accounts?

We keep the accounts of this parish in the printed books published by Shaw, of Fetter-lane; and in conformity with the provision of the Select Vestry Act, they are laid before a general meeting of the parishioners twice a year. In this small parish that process alone, with the facility of reference that is at all times given to any member of the parish, is sufficient for the purposes of publication; but as to auditing, there is no such thing. If the vestry will wink at peculation, and still more, where

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there is no vestry, if the overseers will practise it, as no doubt they often do, there is little, if any, chance of detection. The passing of the accounts, as it is called, before the magistrates once a year is manifestly nugatory; even if they had the ability and wish to examine them, they have not the time. A whole year's accounts of 20 parishes are passed in a couple of hours. The object of ensuring an effective scrutiny into the details of the parish accounts (and a very important object it is) can be attained only by the establishment, in every parish, of a distinct and uniform mode of keeping them, and by the institution of some such superintending authority as the Board recommended in my Answer to Query 44.

51. Can you suggest any and what alteration in the Settlement Laws, for the purpose either of extending the market for labour, or interfering less with contracts, or diminishing fraud or litigation?

The Law of Settlement, in its present form, is one of the great, if not the very greatest scandal of our Poor Laws; it produces more litigation, perjury and expense, and interferes more mischievously with some of the most important concerns of life, than any other; what we want, but what I am afraid it will be hard to find, is some simple uniform rule, which shall be easy and certain of application, and shall secure the rights of individuals, without invading the interests of the community. Among our present modes of conferring a settlement, that by hiring and service is incomparably the most pernicious; it tells the poor man that he shall encounter a prohibitory duty in every market in which he attempts to dispose of the only commodity he must live by selling; it shuts the door against the most respectable and advantageous employment in which a servant can engage; by abridging the term, it impairs the strength of the connexion between him and his master; and it not only drives the servant from his place, but often betrays him, during the interval between his being discharged from one house and hired at another, into bad company, dissipation and vice. Either this mode of acquiring a settlement should be abolished altogether, or the service should be extended to a longer term; and for the same reasons, it is desirable that the tax on domestic servants in Farm-houses should be taken off. I am not aware of any serious objection against the settlement by hiring a tenement, other than that it encourages a fraudulent collusion between landlord and tenant, and that it interferes, as do all the other modes, with the simplicity of the rule which it is desirable to establish. It is to be wished that the various modes by which a settlement can be acquired should, if possible, be reduced to one; and for that purpose the choice seems to lie between settlement by birth, and the total abolition of the law, by which every pauper would become entitled to relief from the parish in which the necessity for it should arise. Against the settlement by birth, it has been urged as one objection, that it would have the effect of burdening a parish with those in helpless age, who had given their youth and vigour to another place; and as a second, that it would operate hardly upon old persons in removing them from the acquired friends of the best part of their lives. As to the first of these objections, it is obvious, that the more extensively the practice prevailed, the less would be the injustice done by it; and that if it became universal, and every parish were to restore the poor it had received from other parishes, and to receive back its own, there would be no injustice at all, either done or suffered. With respect to the second objection, the greater the number and value of the friends the pauper might have acquired, the less would be the probability of his requiring parish relief; and under those circumstances, many might be withheld by the assistance of their friends, or by their own attachments, from seeking that relief which, as the law now stands, they resort to without hesitation. The main objection, as it appears to me, against the settlement by birth, is the number of paupers it would throw upon the parishes in towns, in proportion to parishes in the country; as it is, the number of births in towns is already, I apprehend, increased by the temporary resort of pregnant women from the country; and it would be still more increased, if birth were made the only ground of settlement; often also there would be difficulty in substantiating the fact of the pauper's birth; in many cases he would not himself know where he was born; and in all, the parish officers would dispute his identity. A wide door therefore would still be left open to litigation, and there would be ample room for deceit and perjury on both sides. Even the total abolition of the law of settlement, would by no means remove the occasions of fraud and oppression. Persons likely to become chargeable would resort, in the largest numbers, to those particular parishes in which the condition of the paupers was considered most desirable; and in all parishes the local authorities would endeavour to draw a fence round their bounds, and exclude the access of strangers in any capacity whatever; but it is a difficulty inherent in the very principle of compulsory relief, that no precaution can be efficient against the deceit or ignorance of those who make the claim, on the one hand, and the ingenuity of those whose interest it is to defeat it, on the other; choose what rule we will, and frame it with what dexterity we may, it must, in many cases, be attended with difficulty in the exercise, and in more, perhaps, with injustice in its operation; but be the character and provisions of the law of settlement what they may, litigation and perjury would be very much diminished, and expense almost extinguished, by taking all cases of removal and appeal out of the jurisdiction of the petty or quarter sessions, and transferring them to that of the board, of which I have recommended the establishment. I do not know what is the practice in other counties, but in Berkshire the expense of parochial appeals is increased by an order of the bench, requiring each parish to employ two counsel; before the tribunal here proposed, neither counsel nor attornies would be required, nor ought indeed to be allowed.

52. Do you think it would be advisable to afford greater facilities than now exist, either for the union or for the subdivision of Parishes or Townships, for any purpose connected with the management of Parochial Affairs?

I am not aware that it would. My personal experience in parochial affairs has been confined principally to my own small parish, where there is no room for subdivision, and where, as we have a poor-house of our own, we have no occasion to join with any other. Except on the score of expense, I should think that small districts were susceptible of better management than large ones. The same establishment that is requisite to administer the concerns of one parish, would generally be sufficient for the administration of those of two; but in small parishes, the real circumstances of every individual are better known than in large ones. It must be the fault of their officers if their affairs are not better managed; and especially in every thing that relates to the poor-house, the smaller the

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*Causes of the agri-
cultural riots in
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number of its inmates the better. The character and conduct of a body of paupers will always be worse as they are more numerous. With all the care and vigilance that can be exercised, a poor-house must be, in a greater or less degree, a scene of profligacy. This evil is best palliated by classification; and for that purpose the union of two parishes, each having its own poor-house, might often be advantageous. In most houses, the inmates are already divided, as in ours, into two classes, the infirm and the able-bodied, which in a poor-house is only another term for the idle and the dissolute. Where the numbers are considerable, this separation can hardly be made so effectually as it ought to be under the same roof; and in that case it would be desirable to have the means of placing the separate classes in separate houses.

53. Can you give the Commissioners any information respecting the causes and consequences of the agricultural Riots and Burning of 1830 and 1831?

Though I have not witnessed any instance either of fire or riot in my own parish, there have been many in the neighbourhood; and I am at this very time engaged, with the other magistrates of the division, in investigating the circumstances of a fire, evidently the act of an incendiary, which took place on the 24th of last month, in the parish of Hurst. By all that I have seen and heard, I am convinced that the fires have been exclusively the result of private malice or revenge, and have in all cases been perpetrated by individuals residing on the spot. Wherever a detection has taken place, this has proved to be the case; and many different fires, in districts where they have been numerous, have been traced to the same parties. I have a strong persuasion that, extensive as the crime has been, the incendiaries have been few in number, and have rarely had accomplices; a secret which was known to many could never have been kept as this has been. The project has been engendered in the malicious or vindictive passions of an individual, and he has been encouraged in it by seeing with what ease the act was perpetrated, and how difficult it was of detection. From Kent, where it seems to have been derived from France, the contagion spread by obvious steps; the progress was gradual and regular; the practice, which was witnessed at one place to-day, was imitated in the neighbourhood on the morrow, and was conveyed by example from county to county. The instigation was neither propagated by the press, nor travelled on horseback nor in gigs. I am satisfied that there were no unseen agents, that there was no mysterious conspiracy, nor premeditated suggestion. In this, and I apprehend in all agricultural districts, there is very little reading of tracts or newspapers among the poor. They take no concern in any politics beyond those of their village, or at the utmost of their county; and if a hand-bill or a passage from a newspaper is ever read by one of them to his companions at the beer-house, on a Saturday evening, it is because it relates to some parties they know, or to some incident of their neighbourhood. On what account, I am not prepared to say, for I am not aware of the existence of any adequate cause, but it is an indisputable fact, that for some time before the disturbances broke out in 1830, discontent had been more prevalent than usual among the agricultural labourers. The spirit itself was almost universal, though it assumed a different form in some districts from that in which it appeared in others. In the western division of this county, where the riots prevailed, there were no fires; and in the eastern, where the fires prevailed, there were no riots. To a certain extent, the burning of ricks is a mode of revenge which has always been practised among the agricultural labourers. They make a wide distinction between burning a rick and burning a house; between destroying property and endangering life; and many who will gratify their revenge by doing the one, will shrink from the perpetration of the other. When we were about to establish our select vestry, nearly two years ago, before the general burning began, I, for the first time, insured my farming stock. On going to the Phoenix office for that purpose, I stated that I did so because we were about to adopt a new system for the management of our poor, which I thought might in the outset excite ill-will, and expose my property to danger. At that time I received one, and only one, threatening letter; and although the threat contained in it was of blood, fire was the danger to which I looked. In some instances, though I apprehend in very few, the proprietors are supposed to have been themselves the incendiaries, for the purpose of defrauding the insurance offices. Among the immediate effects of the fires, the most obvious have been to raise the wages of labourers, in some instances to diminish the use of threshing machines, and to exclude non-parishioners almost as vigorously from occasional work, as the law of settlement before excluded them from yearly hiring. A more extensive effect has been perhaps to intimidate the farmers generally, and to deter the parochial authorities from pursuing the same firm and salutary course, which otherwise they would have done, in the control and management of their poor. But the most mischievous and most lasting consequence, I am afraid, will prove, that whether the present condition of the labourers be or be not better than it was before this visitation, they themselves not only think that it is, but refer the improvement to the fires. They consider therefore that they have in their own hands an easy and comparatively a safe remedy for their grievances, whether real or imaginary; and among the mass, some will always be found desperate enough to resort to it.

Having requested of Mr. Russell a more complete account of the dispauperized Labourers in this parish than had been given by Mr. Terry, I received in answer from Mr. Russell the following Letter:—

“ Dear Sir,

Swallowfield, November 5th, 1833.

“ A LIST of those men who, before we had a select vestry, were dependant principally upon parochial relief, and who, since the establishment of the vestry, have supported themselves, would comprehend almost every labourer in the parish, except those who are in constant employment as carters, gardeners or in any other permanent capacity, and who consist of course of the men of the best character and steadiest habits. On examining the books, I have selected the following fifteen persons as instances of the improvement that has taken place under our new system, in the conduct and condition of the labourers. The whole population of the parish, according to the last return is only 390; and of that number 68 are agricultural labourers above the age of 14. The persons here mentioned therefore are nearly one-fourth of the whole; and, taking into account only the married men, to whom the inquiry principally relates, the proportion is still larger. It is necessary, however, to premise, that in considering all statements upon this subject having reference to the county of Berks, it must be remembered that the system called ‘make up,’ or ‘bread money,’ prevails extensively, and that a man is not regarded as being ‘upon the parish,’ if he only has his weekly earnings

earnings made up to the price of two gallon loaves for himself, and one for every other member of his family.

Elijah Wheeler.
John King.
William Oakley.
Joseph Oakley.
John Oakley.

James Cordery.
Charles Cordery.
James Deane.
George Cooper.
James Davis.

James David.
Richard Read.
David Read.
Richard Dance.
Thomas Davis.

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*Individual examples
of the effects of a
change of system.*

"The first three names in this list are those of the men described in Mr. John Terry's letter to you of the 7th of last month. It is several years since Elijah Wheeler had any relief from the parish. I meet him frequently with his cart, and have reason to believe that his habits and condition are perfectly respectable. The house occupied by John King, and now used as a beer house, with an acre and a half of ground adjoining it, belong to himself, for a term, of which 38 years are still unexpired; and he is perhaps, on that account, the strongest instance in the parish how much the facility of procuring relief has the effect of making men dependant upon it. But for the pernicious practice under the old system, of giving relief to almost every body that asked for it, there is no reason why this man should have been more in want of assistance formerly than he is now. With respect to William Oakley, Mr. Terry is mistaken in supposing him to have a family. He is a single man, and Mr. Terry has most likely confounded him with his brother Joseph, who is the next in the above list. Until some sort of control was introduced into the parish by the select vestry, William Oakley was in the lowest possible state of idleness and misery. He never did any work at all; he was covered with rags and vermin; he had no fixed home, but slept under a hedge, or in any out house to which he could get access. The clothes with which the parish occasionally supplied him, were made away with for food or liquor; and, for some time, every attempt of the vestry to reclaim him was unavailing; by degrees, however, an amendment was wrought; and, although it would be too much to say that his reformation is complete, it is still greater than under such circumstances, I could have expected. He now works steadily; he has no money but what he earns; he buys his own clothes, and keeps them; he sleeps at least with a roof over his head, and he has lost those reckless habits, and that squalid appearance, which before distinguished him from every other man in the parish. And for this change there is no other reason than the necessity of the case; he shifts for himself, because he is obliged to do so.

"Joseph and John Oakley are the brothers of William, and though not so abject in their personal habits, they were hardly more respectable in character or conduct, Joseph is the only one of the three that is married. He has three children under eight years old. Formerly he lived upon the parish, and was always in want and idleness. John was, some years ago, in constant employ in my garden, but he absconded to avoid a warrant which was issued against him for theft, and was absent for some time. On his return he threw himself on the parish, and lived chiefly on the relief he obtained. Since the establishment of our vestry, a great improvement has taken place in both these brothers. Joseph has, for the last three years, been in almost constant employ with the same farmer, John works with different employers, and occasionally for the surveyor; and neither of them receives any relief out of the rates.

"James Cordery is an instance of the dissolute habits into which ingenuity too often betrays persons in low life. By trade he is a hurdle maker; he is also a carpenter, chair-mender and tinker, and used to play the violoncello in church, and to teach the parish children to sing. But the more money he was able to earn the more he was given to squander; he wasted his time at the alehouse and among prostitutes, and was never off the parish. Since the vestry refused to maintain him, he has had no difficulty in maintaining himself. He provided himself with a set of implements, and now lives in Reading, and earns an ample livelihood in grinding knives, and mending pots and pans. With the exception of a fortnight last summer, when he was taken into the poor-house in consequence of an attack of rheumatic gout, he has had no relief for the last four years; and, instead of bringing up his children in their former idle habits, he is now endeavouring to apprentice one of his sons to a shoemaker.

"Charles Cordery, no relation of the foregoing, is a married man with four children, of whom the eldest is under fifteen. He is so skilful and diligent a workman, that it must be his own fault if he is ever out of employ. Yet, under the former system, he was almost always dependant upon the parish; his wife and children were as idle and ragged as himself; and so bad was their character for pilfering and depredation, that they were successively turned out of every cottage that was occupied by them. At last they were absolutely without a roof to shelter them, and the vestry refused to support them any longer out of the rates. I was always disposed to think the man better than he appeared to be; and, on his promise of amendment, I consented to place his family in a cottage belonging to my father, notwithstanding the remonstrance of the farmer upon whose land it stood. Except in one instance, just after they had taken possession, I have had no complaint from their neighbours. The man is in constant work; his family seems to be in comfort; his rent is regularly paid; and his garden has been so well cultivated, that I am now enlarging it to such an extent as, I hope, will enable him to grow vegetables enough for his consumption.

"James Deane is married, and has three infant children. He has never borne a good character, and was, some time ago, imprisoned for robbing his master's garden. He was formerly always idle, and a constant burden on the parish; but since the change of system introduced by the select vestry compelled him to depend on his own exertions, he has found work and supported his family. He occupies a cottage under the same roof as Charles Cordery; he is employed by the farmer, on whose land it is situated; and at his request I have consented to make an addition to his garden, similar to that described in the case of his neighbour.

"George Cooper, though he had advantages superior to most other men in the parish, was always as much in want of relief as any of them. Until 1830 he had a cottage, with an acre of land, rent-free; he kept bees; he had an allowance from a gentleman in the parish, which produced him about 5*l.* a year, for clearing and trimming a range of young hedges, which he did at unemployed intervals; and he was capable of draining, ditching, planting, and all the most profitable kinds of work; yet he seemed to be always in need, and was constantly applying to the parish for assistance. Since relief has been refused to him by the vestry, his cottage has been sold to a new landlord, and he has no facilities in procuring work that he had not before; yet he now not only supports his family, but pays his rent without complaint, and his children seem as much improved in their industry as he is himself.

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"James Davis has three children under ten years old. He is a good labourer, and understands draining, ditching, and all the better sorts of agricultural work; but before the affairs of the parish were under the management of a select vestry, he was constantly dependent upon relief. He is of a sullen discontented temper, owing to which he lost a good place in a gentleman's garden; but he now supports himself and his family, and appears to have his full share of ordinary work.

"James David is an elderly man with a grown-up family. By trade he is a thatcher; but he is also a carpenter, sawyer and shoemaker, and can turn his hand to various jobs requiring dexterity. In his own trade alone, he might always have found ample employment. There is but one other thatcher in the parish, and the work is more than he can get through; but David's dishonesty keeps pace with his skill, and nobody will trust him out of sight with their straw. He was always in want, and always on the parish; but since the vestry have peremptorily refused him relief, he has contrived to do without it. His condition is apparently better than it was, and, for nearly four years, we have had neither complaint nor application from him.

"Richard and David Read are father and son. Richard is about 56 years old, and has seven children, of whom the youngest four still live with him. David's age is about 34, and he has five children, of whom the eldest is under 12. The loose character and habits of the whole of this family, of both sexes, have always been such as to exclude them from permanent, and therefore from the most advantageous and respectable employment. But both the father and the son are remarkable for their skill and diligence as workmen, and the son is the strongest man in the parish. I happened to be one of the visiting justices of the gaol when he was committed for deserting his family; and, on the occasion of a disturbance among the prisoners, I found that he had been chosen, by common consent, as the most powerful man within the walls. They both understand draining, ditching, planting, making roads and walks, levelling and laying out grounds, and every sort of agricultural and ornamental work requiring dexterity and neatness. They have both worked a good deal, and still are working, for me, to my entire satisfaction in every respect; Richard as superintendant, and David in the same capacity, when his father has found an advantageous job elsewhere. Under the old system they both lived in habitual reliance on the parish, though Richard has a cottage rent-free for his life. David, by his own loose habits, actually reduced himself and his family to take shelter under a hedge, when he was put into a cottage taken for him by the parish, the overseers becoming responsible for the rent, which, however, he now pays regularly; and both the father and the son, though no essential amendment can be said to have taken place, either in their own propensities or those of their families, now support themselves and their children; and no application for relief has been made by either of them for a considerable time past. Richard Read's wife was the first person from whom I had a complaint of the distress occasioned to herself and her children by her husband's frequenting the new beer-houses; and it was to him that I referred in my answer to N^o 40 of your circular Queries. With him, and with most others in his condition, this evil is and must continue to be unabated, in spite of all that the local authorities can do to prevent it. The more I see of the effect of these houses, the more I am convinced that they have done and still are doing more to impoverish and corrupt the English labourer, than all the mal-administration of the Poor Laws for the last 50 years put together.

"Richard Dance is a widower with four children, of whom the eldest is about 16. He was a soldier, and has a pension of 1 s. a week. Neither his habits, nor his skill as an agricultural labourer, were improved by his being in the army, and notwithstanding his pension, and the advantage of occupying a cottage belonging to the parish, for which he pays no rent, he used to be in constant want and the constant receipt of relief. Since the establishment of the vestry, he has been independent of the parish, and is now free from those indications of distress which his appearance used to exhibit.

"Thomas Davis is one of the most active young men and best labourers in the parish. He is able to perform every sort of agricultural work; but he has never borne a good character. He is a loose, blustering fellow, a loud and specious talker, and acts, upon occasion, as the spokesman for his brethren. At the time of the riots, in the winter of 1830, he was the only man in the parish who offered any objection to being sworn in as a special constable. He endeavoured to make terms for the compliance of the labourers, and was beginning to advocate their alleged grievances, but he was soon put down by the spirited interposition of a gentleman who was present. If his courage kept pace with his wishes, he might be a dangerous man; as it is, he is rather the instigator than the perpetrator of mischief. He has seven children, of whom the eldest is under 14, and, until the establishment of the vestry, was constantly dependent upon parochial relief. Since the change of the system I have heard no complaint from him of his being in want, though he does not apply so much of his earnings as he ought to the support of his family. This is the man to whom I referred in one of my answers to the circular Queries, as having, in November last year, been earning 15 s. a week at threshing. Some years ago he was allowed by the parish officers to build a cottage upon a piece of parish land, for which he was to pay a yearly rent of 1 l.; but he seldom has paid it. He is as well able to do so as any other man in the place; but having the parish for his landlord, he reckons upon their forbearance.

"I referred the foregoing list to our assistant overseer, and this is the note with which he returned it to me. 'These men were working principally on the parish from April 1829 (the date of the assistant overseer's appointment) to December of the same year, when they were employed by ———; and from that time till the present we have never had any one on the parish for more than a month at a time, except in case of illness.'

"The sum of this is, that the labourers generally have the means of independent support within their reach, but that, except in a few instances, of rare sobriety and providence, they will not, of their own accord, make the efforts necessary to command them. Of most of the men here described, I have said that they are good and diligent workmen. A want of ability and willingness to work, when work is given to them, is not among the faults of English labourers; and it cannot be expected that they will be at the trouble of finding work, if they can find support without it. They will not go in search of the meat of industry, if they can sit down and eat the bread of idleness. If you maintain them in doing nothing, and put the key of the beer-house into their hand, what right have you to complain that they are idle and dissolute? A gentleman who has for many years farmed largely in this parish, told me that before the select vestry was established, he frequently saw the labourers, in parties of 12 or 14, sauntering along the streams, in pursuit of moor hens, and of course

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course poaching fish, when it was not the season to poach game. Their time, and the money they obtained from the overseer, were necessarily spent in drunkenness, dissipation and pilfering.

"The effect of the system to which this statement refers has been materially to reduce the amount of the poor's rate. In the year in which we established a select vestry (1829-30) our expenses were increased by various charges arising out of the change of system, and by an outlay of 70*l.* imposed upon us in law proceedings. In that year the rate was 6*s.* 8*d.* in the pound on the rack rent. The average rate of the three years preceding the change was 6*s.* 1*d.* but that of the three years subsequent to it has been only 4*s.* 5*d.*; nor has the benefit been confined to the payers of rate. The condition of the poor has undergone a visible amendment. They are better fed and better clothed; they bear an appearance of greater ease and comfort, and they are more healthy than they were. When some exceptions were taken to our new regulations in 1829, I referred to the gentleman who contracts for the medical treatment of our poor, to know what effect the change had had upon their health. He told me that, under the old system, disease had become so prevalent in the parish, that he had made up his mind to relinquish the contract as no longer worth his holding; but that so great an improvement had taken place under the new system, that he had abandoned his intention, and he has continued to attend the parish ever since. I repeated the same question to him yesterday, and his reply was, that although the parish had partaken of such disorders as had at various times been prevalent in the country, the improvement in the general health of the poor still continued relatively to what it had been before our change of system.

"Even among the labourers themselves the change was productive of little discontent. What alarm they did shew, was when the select vestry was first talked of, and when they had an indistinct apprehension of unknown and indefinite changes, rather than when the new system had been actually put in force. One man only, James David, who is mentioned in the foregoing list, attempted any resistance. We proceeded against him, by complaint before the bench, and he was sent to the tread-mill. Before the expiration of his sentence, the parish officers solicited a remission of the remainder, and we have never since had occasion to resort to coercive measures. Our vestry was established in 1829. The agricultural disturbances took place in the following year. We were in the midst of the disorder, surrounded by the devastation committed by machine-breakers and incendiaries, yet there was neither a riot nor a fire in the parish, nor any single instance of malicious injury to property.

"I remain, dear Sir, yours very truly,

"To E. Chadwick, Esq.

"H. Russell."

I have been favoured by Mr. Russell and by the minister of the parish with a return of the marriages and births in this parish, which return I shall insert and notice in another part of my Report.

In a subsequent communication, Mr. Russell observes—

"That in rural districts the radical vice of our practice consists in the making up of wages out of the poor-rate; it has, at once, done more than all other measures put together both to aggravate the burden of those who pay the rates, and to degrade the character of those who receive them, and is, at the same time, the most difficult and the most dangerous of correction. Before the introduction of this practice, the coming upon the parish was looked upon as the lowest pitch to which a labourer could sink; it was the heaviest calamity that an industrious man could dread, and the severest punishment that could fall upon a profligate one. Now, every man is on the parish; and there is, in that respect at least, no longer any distinction between the diligent and the idle, the honest and the dissolute. The pauper receives his portion of the rates, not as a gift, but as a payment; he takes it as a part of the wages he has earned by his labour, and considers that he has the same right to it as the landlord has to his rent. Before any real good can be accomplished, this feeling, and the practice out of which it has arisen, must be corrected. With judgment and firmness they may be corrected; the process will be delicate, and in some respects dangerous; but I am satisfied that such a Central Board as that recommended, with its itinerant Commissioners to visit and inspect the different districts, and to receive and examine the complaints of the poor, will be able to surmount the difficulty. The commissioners should also have power to decide all litigated questions arising out of the law of settlement, and other parochial matters. By that provision alone parishes would be saved the heaviest expense to which they are now subjected. In the beginning, at least, the rates, though expended under the direction of the new board, ought, I think, to be levied, as they now are, by the local officers of each particular parish. If the fund required for the support of the new system were raised in a new manner, in the shape of a tax to which the payers were not accustomed, jealousy and discontent would be excited, even although the amount were smaller than that of the old rate. When the new system had been some time in action, and the rate-payers had practically felt the benefit of it, the present method of levying the rate might be equalized and simplified in any way that might be thought expedient.

"I am surprised that any doubt should have arisen as to the extent of the powers to be vested in the Central Board. With the responsibility and supervision to which the Commissioners are subjected, I see no possible mischief that can result from such powers as those with which it is proposed to invest them; and of this I am well assured, that with so inveterate and extensive an evil to contend against, they can do no effectual good if their powers are not large. At this time of day it can no longer be necessary to prove that it is vain to look for any amendment from the voluntary, unaided exertions of the parochial authorities. What inducements are there for them to amend their practice now, that have not been staring them in the face for years past? The country has been ringing with clamours against the burden of the poor-rate; and everybody who has thought upon the subject at all has long been satisfied, that if something be not done to check the evil, it will overwhelm us in the end. Yet, among persons the best informed and most interested in the matter, how few are there who will take the trouble, or incur the obloquy, of attempting a remedy. I send you a printed paper, which was circulated in this parish a few months ago, and a copy of some explanatory observations with which I thought it right to communicate it at the time, to some of the gentlemen in my neighbourhood.

"I will take this opportunity of pointing out an instance of hardship to which this parish has been subjected by the operation of the labour-rate, and to which other parishes are liable, in the precise proportion in which their affairs are carefully and successfully administered. In the adjoining parish of Strathfieldsay the rates are high enough to admit of their adopting the labour-rate, and they have

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*Expediency of a
Central Board.*

*Expediency of
investing them with
extensive powers.*

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done so. By good luck or good management the rates in our parish have been reduced to 3 s. 4 d. in the pound, and therefore we are precluded from adopting the labour-rate, even if we wished it. But some of the Strathfieldsay farmers occupy land in our parish; and they now, of course, employ upon their Swallowfield land the labourers they are compelled to take in Stratfieldsay, to the exclusion of the Swallowfield labourers by whom it was before cultivated. For my own part, I object to the principle of the labour-rate altogether; but if the law will meddle with things it had much better let alone, and will compel men to employ labour of which they have no need, let it at least compel them to employ that labour in the parish to which it belongs. As it is, the benefit of the Act, if there be any benefit in it, is confined to those parishes which are the worst administered; and, in our particular case, the parish of Strathfieldsay is enabled to shift the consequences of its own mismanagement upon our shoulders; and we are incurring penalties from which, if we did but conduct our affairs as ill as our neighbours, we should be exempt."

BURGHFIELD, BERKS.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	738	791	881	965

Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
	£. 815	£. 852	£. 963	£. 826	£. 952	£. 939

The Rev. *Henry Curtis Cherry*, Rector of Burghfield, and one of the acting Magistrates for the Reading division of Berkshire, Examined.

Discontinuance of
the allowance
system.

Reception of the
measure by the
farmers.

In the beginning of the year 1831, the magistrates of the Reading division gave notice, that they considered the payment of wages from the poor's rates to able-bodied men, while in the service and employment of their masters, was illegal. The older magistrates, who had countenanced the allowance system, objected to this, saying, "How are the fathers of families who had several children to procure support without parochial relief." The reply to this was, that the evil was of the father's own creation, and that to continue the system was to continue the bounties to improvident marriages. The notification excited very great displeasure on the part of the farmers, and especially in Burghfield. A vestry meeting was accordingly held the 23d day of February 1831, of which the following is an extract from the vestry-book.

"At a vestry held this 23d day of February 1831, for the purpose of consulting if it would be proper to have legal advice on the proposition of the magistrates in the alteration of paying the poor, it was unanimously agreed upon to have such advice."—[Here follow the names of the parish officers and five other inhabitants.]

Application was made to an able attorney of Reading, and the result was, as I am given to understand, that the farmers found the magistrates were acting most properly and legally in stemming the iniquitous practice of making up wages, and that the best course for the parish to adopt was in future to discontinue it: they have so done, and I fearlessly maintain, that the condition of the labourer, more especially the single man, has since been improving. Mr. Clift has this day stated, that he considers, in another year, as much as 200 l. will be saved to the parish by this alteration of system, and by not mixing up the highway and poor-rates accounts together.

By the single
labourers.

The whole of the single labourers, including those who were on the parish as well as those who were independent, hailed the notification with great satisfaction; as they considered that it would render wages in future more proportioned to their labour, and that single men would have a better chance. The married men were of course dissatisfied; but no eventual manifestation was elicited. Some of them came to me and said, "What are we to do?" I told them, that "if their employers could not give them a fair remunerating price (meaning by a remunerating price 10 s. at the least for the week) for their labour, let them come to me and I would order them to work on the parish account." There were two classes of persons in my parish, namely, the holders of small portions of land, and the shopkeepers who were assessed to the rates, and who had in fact been in the habit of paying portions of the wages of the farmers' labourers, who rejoiced exceedingly at the notice. In my parish the allowance system was immediately discontinued. Many persons having large families then came as I had told them. They said, "we find it impossible to live on the farmer's wages of 8 s. or 9 s. a week, now that we are deprived of the additional 3 s. or 4 s. a week which was formerly allowed us, what are we to do?" The Bench almost entirely concurred in saying, that if the employers of the applicants would not give them sufficient support, they must work for the parish. Many of the farmers, rather than lose their best men, consented to give an increase of from 1 s. to 3 s. a week wages. There were two or three cases where the farmers would not advance the wages, and the applicants were employed on the parish account at about 10 s. a week. The farmers did not employ so many men as before, where they had employed five they employed four, and therefore the rates did not decrease as expected; but still the rates have remained very nearly stationary. The wages of the single men have increased from 1 s. 6 d. to 2 s. per week. Some of the smaller holders of land and the shopkeepers have expressed themselves very well satisfied with the change.

By small shopkeep-
ers and holders of
land.

Farmers forced to
give better wages to
their men.

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In my parish we have discontinued the practice of paying the rents of cottages, except in cases of the aged and impotent, *bonâ fide* cases under the 43d of Elizabeth. It was no unusual circumstance for the landed proprietors to let their cottages, appended to their farms, then expecting one entire rent for all, while the tenant of the farm received the rents for the cottages from the parish funds, though in many cases able-bodied labourers, but merely because they had large families, had house-room thus provided for them rent-free; no slight encouragement to men to be no longer single. This change has been satisfactory even to the farmers, because they were well aware that the owners of these cottages were receiving these rents which otherwise they would not collect. Parish security is of course considered the best. The rents of the cottages have kept up, and with few exceptions have been paid. The population of our parish is not excessive, and we have scarcely house-room for as many as we could wish.

With regard to accounts, notice has been given by the Bench that the surveyors' accounts and the overseers' accounts shall in future be kept totally distinct. Formerly they were so jumbled as to afford means of mismanagement.

Notwithstanding such notice, in my own parish, the accounts of the surveyors and overseers were the following year still connected together; the consequence has been, that the following entry, for paupers working on the parish roads, 142 *l.* 13 *s.* 7½ *d.*, was disallowed by the magistrates, and struck out; and to this day (the 14th October instant) the accounts have not been passed.

The following items were also disallowed:

For Elizabeth Wheeler's child - - - - £.4 5 -

(The parish officers being unwilling to punish the reputed father, living at large on the common, as they were fearful of the expense of maintaining his family by his wife, then dead, while he was in prison: no trifling premium on bastardy !!)

Also John Ham's rent - - - - - £.2 12 -

Widow Crocker's rent - - - - - 1 10 -

Some enactment ought to be provided against the practice most general, of entering in overseers' accounts the amount of several bills *as paid*, when no such payments have been made, or vouchers given in return; as for instance, done in my parish last year,

Arrowsmith	-	-	-	-	£.25	8	6
Workman	-	-	-	-	-	14	6
Leach	-	-	-	-	-	2	10
					£.28	13	6

In the parish we have no means of superintending the labourers, so as to impose task-work; the consequence is, that little work is done on the parish account, and the gravel-pits and roads where the men are employed are scenes of idleness and demoralization.

The difference of parish work and private work is exemplified by the fact, that in many instances single men have in our parish preferred 6 *s.* a week for working on the roads or in the gravel-pits, to 7 *s.* or 8 *s.* a week from the farmer. The practice is, when such an application was made for labour by a farmer (provided the farmer's offer was not an unreasonable one), and when the pauper refused to accept it, to give notice to the latter that the parish will no longer support him. He has then mostly accepted the labour. In two instances paupers refused, and I heard no more about them.

Parochial Rating.—There is another subject to which I would call your attention as requiring the interference of the Legislature; I mean the unjust plan, so general in many parishes, of having the rate or assessment for the relief of the poor made by one or two interested persons, themselves being rate-payers, without any previous valuation of the parish having been taken by competent and professional surveyors.

Finding in my own parish, that one or two farmers (who from a habit of long-assumed authority over their neighbours in vestry assembled, did pretty much as they pleased) had, on my purchasing some land, assessed me to more than the rack rent paid by the previous tenant, while the adjacent lands were rated (merely because occupied by themselves) on a considerably lower scale, I appealed at the Newbury sessions, held 10th April last, against a rate made 13th December 1832, which was unanimously quashed. I entered at the same time a notice of appeal against the subsequent rate, which the parish officers were advised by their attorney not to defend, and by mutual consent between appellant and respondents, it was also quashed. Strange as it may appear, the third rate was made on the same iniquitous and unequal mode of assessment, and I was therefore compelled to serve notices of appeal, to be tried on Tuesday next at the Abingdon quarter sessions. This firmness of purpose on my part was too much for the overseers, and they have now, in vestry assembled, come to the determination of having the parish professionally valued, and a new assessment made, grounded upon such valuation. It is worthy of remark, that the parish has never at any time been valued for the purpose of a poor-rate. There are many farmers and other rate-payers in the parish who have personally tendered me their

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Parish Accounts.

Parish unable to
hire superintendent
of the paupers, or
impose task-work.Paupers' work, and
the work of inde-
pendent labourers,
contrasted.

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best thanks for the public part I have thus taken in ensuring for the parish an equal and impartial assessment of their several occupations, not subject, as before, to be affected by the caprice, ill will or obstinacy of one or two interested individuals.

The points I would suggest as requiring alteration and revision are—

1st. That every parish be valued by two professional and disinterested persons, appointed by the general quarter sessions of the county, upon application to this effect by any two persons aggrieved by any assessment or rate for the relief of the poor, where it shall be made to appear to the majority of the justices that no such valuation has ever been taken.

2d. That a terrier be made and kept in every parish, (of which a copy shall be sent to the clerk of the peace, to be placed among the records of the county,) containing a description of all the property rateable for the relief of the poor; also of land, whether arable, pasture, meadow and woodland, the value per acre, proprietors, occupiers, &c.

3d. That after such valuation and assessment grounded thereon, no subsequent alteration shall be made in the rate without previous application by the overseers to the petty sessions of the division, where the justices shall inquire into the causes of such alteration, and ministerially allow the same under their hands and seals, if there be due cause.

4th. That any person aggrieved by such alteration shall, instead of the expensive mode of appeal at the quarter sessions being resorted to, which cannot be borne by the poorer rate-payers, complain to the justices in petty sessions assembled, who shall summarily determine the matter, their decision of course subject to an appeal to the general quarter sessions of the county.

Oct. 114 1833.

H. C. Cherry.

Mr. Samuel Clift, Assistant Overseer of Burghfield.

Mr. Clift stated that he had known instances where the men who received 6s. a week from the parish, had refused 9s. a week from the farmer.

In answer to my inquiries as to the cause of the loose habits of the men at work at the gravel-pits, he stated that the parish had no means of procuring the requisite superintendence. "One great difficulty," said he, "which we find in managing the labour of the paupers, is the irregularity as to the number; we have four or five labourers to-day, but to-morrow we may have ten, and the next day only two or three."

Deterioration of
labourers by parish
work in the gravel-
pits.
Redundant popula-
tion.

He thought the skill of the workmen degenerating. There were too many of them bred up only in the gravel-pits. There was work enough for the skilled hands; they were sought after. In answer to an inquiry whether the population of the parish was redundant, he said, "I think it is. When I have as many as 20 men at my gate on the Monday morning, and the farmers only come and hire two or three of them, that, I suppose, is what is meant by a redundant population: this occurs frequently." He did not think that the farmers could employ more men, or pay higher wages, than they now did. The farmers of that district could now scarcely pay their way.

Cottage allotments
and common rights
do not prevent the
owners coming upon
this parish.

The people who enjoyed common rights, and the occupiers of small allotments of land, came for relief as often as any other class. He had known persons come for relief who occupied an acre or two of land.

Effect of the discon-
tinuance of the al-
lowance system.

The allowance system had been discontinued in that parish without any difficulty. They paid a little more for relief during the first year, and the second year the expenditure had been stationery; he was, however, convinced that the discontinuance of the allowance system had saved the parish from destruction; it did this by the immediate check which it gave to population. Whilst the allowance system went on "it was," he said, "a common thing for young people to come to me for parish relief two or three days after they were married: nay, I have had them come to me just as they came out of church and apply to me for a loaf of bread to eat, and for a bed to lie on that night, and, moreover, for a house for them to live in. But this sort of marriages is now checked, and in a few years the parish will probably be brought about. If the former system had gone on we should have been swallowed up in a short time."

Is your knowledge of the individuals resident in your parish such that you can state without doubt that there are persons in it, now single, who would, under the influence of the system of allowing rates in aid of wages, have married had that system been continued? —I have no doubt whatever that several of them would have married; I know them so well that I am sure of it.

The preceding testimony was taken at the end of autumn last year. In a communication of the date of the 14th of October last Mr. Cherry states,

"My opinion is now more fully confirmed, by every day's experience, that the most beneficial results are accruing from the discontinuance of the allowance system. That the farmers at Burghfield entertain the idea that poor-rates are, more properly speaking, paid by the landlords and not by them, is evident; and I do not question that, as a matter of profit and loss, they would rather keep up the rates than depress them, for so much the more consideration on this account is gained from the landlord at the next agreement for rent. Mr. Clift states the improvement in the condition

dition of the labourer to be progressive; and I am certain that the farmers' men are more contented to receive their whole wages from their master, than trust, as before, to the precariousness of parish pay. The bench of magistrates at Reading have unanimously concurred in giving orders that in future, statute duty must be done on the highways, thereby obliging all to send their teams and labourers upon the roads. Thus parish paupers will be more employed as farmers' men, and in their capacity of parish men be precluded from working in the gravel-pits. Thus that sink of iniquity will now only be resorted to by men employed on the surveyor's account."

Mr. Cherry favoured me with various documents with relation to this subject. The following is the public notice in the Reading paper, published at that time, of the determination of several of the magistrates of the county to use all lawful means in future to discountenance and repress the growth of the abuse in question:

"Berkshire, to wit:—At the General Quarter Sessions of the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, holden at Reading, for the said county, on Tuesday the 9th day of January 1828, were present: Sir Charles Rich, bart., Mr. Dundas and Mr. R. Palmer, the county Members, Messrs. Goodlake, Mitford, Congreve, Wilder, C. Sawyer, A. Vansittart, Charles F. Palmer, Monck, T. Bowles, Elliott, Browne, Green, Duffield, Walter, Cherry, Gardiner, Bacon and Bunny, the Rev. J. Wells, Henry E. St. John and E. Cove, clerks; who, having taken into their serious consideration the injurious consequences of paying labourers' wages in part out of the poor-rates, are sorry to observe that this system is gradually extending itself year after year; and it is their apprehension of the growth of this abuse that has induced them to give this public notice of their determination to use all lawful means in future to discountenance and to repress it. In yielding to their own sense of duty in this particular, it is a satisfaction to them to know that they are complying also with the recommendation of a Committee of the House of Commons, contained in a late valuable Report on this subject. (On Labourers' Wages, 1824). *Proceedings for the discontinuance of the allowance system.*

"The said justices wish to suggest to the impartial judgment of all persons, and particularly of churchwardens and overseers, that the practice complained of is at once irritating and degrading to the labourers, unjust to all such payers of the poor-rates as have occasion to employ few or no hands, and ultimately ruinous to the landlords, as tending to spread over every parish a redundant, and consequently an ill-paid, discontented, lawless and vicious population. An increase of crime has uniformly attended the progress of an increase of misery among the people.

"It being the aim of the new system to reduce the reward of industry to the limit of a bare subsistence, the single man accordingly, in those places where this system has been perfected, receives no more wages than are sufficient to afford him bread; and thus, finding his condition comfortless and hopeless, and in no respect superior to that of a married man with a wife and children, has no inducement to remain single. The difficulty of maintaining a family no longer exhibits itself in contrast with the comparative ease of the single man, but the single man is rather punished for his forbearance, as the married man lives no harder than himself, and has at least one enjoyment more in the society of his wife and children. The introduction of such a mode of paying labourers is assuming a right, by the persons introducing it, not only to fix a rate of wages, but to fix a rate of wages upon a principle most erroneous and mischievous.

"If the justices at quarter sessions, who had an undoubted authority to fix from time to time the rate of labourers' wages, have nevertheless of late years abstained from the exercise of this right, they have so abstained, from a conviction that wages, generally speaking, are most beneficially left to find their own level, but certainly they never intended, in relinquishing this right themselves, that it should be assumed by others to whom no such right belongs. The statute 3 William and Mary, c. 11, s. 11, expressly enacts, that parish officers shall keep a register of the names of all such persons as receive relief, together with the occasion in each case of such relief; that this register shall be submitted to the parishioners in their vestry, to be examined and allowed by them, and that when it has been so examined and allowed, no other person shall receive relief but by authority under the hand of one justice of the peace, except in certain cases of emergency. The Act of 50 Geo. 3, c. 49, directs that the overseers' accounts shall be submitted to two or more justices at a special sessions; and the Act empowers the justices, if they shall so think fit, to examine into the matter of every account, and to disallow and strike out of every such account all such charges and payments as they shall deem to be unfounded, and to reduce such as they shall deem exorbitant; and they are to specify the cause for which any charge is disallowed or reduced.

"There can be no doubt that, under one or other or both of the said statutes, the justices are armed with sufficient power to correct every abuse, and in particular that greatest of all abuses, the application of the parish-rates to the payment of labour done exclusively for the benefit of individuals. This abuse is generally effected under the cloak of making a man an allowance on account of the number of his children. It must be left to the good sense of the justices in their different divisions to determine, in each case, when this allowance is legitimate, and when it is colourable and fraudulent. The whole administration of the poor-laws, in the last resort, is still left in the hands of the justices; and to the justices, therefore, exclusively belongs the credit of a right, and the discredit of a wrong, administration of them. It is stated, in the before-mentioned Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, that, in the divisions of Oswaldslow, in the county of Worcester, the practice of paying part of the wages of labour out of the poor-rate has been entirely put a stop to by the vigilance of the magistrates. In our own county, in the parish of Cookham, the same object has nearly been accomplished, and the result has been a reduction of the poor-rate from 3,133*l.* in 1819, to 996*l.* in 1825, the price of the peck loaf in both years being the same.

"These instances sufficiently prove what may be effected by magistrates, if they are vigilant and in earnest; and the justices of this county hope, that they shall have the concurrence and co-operation of the parish officers in their endeavours to restrict the administration of the poor-rate to its original legitimate objects, and to restore the labourer to his former condition of comfort and independence."

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Mr. Cherry was prepared to proceed further with the subject, and he was about to move at the sessions the adoption of the following resolution, (see a Letter to the Magistrates of the South of England, by G. P. Scrope, esq. * from which the resolution is taken); but he deferred his motion in consequence of the appointment of the Poor Law Commission.

“Resolution.”—That the payment of a portion of the labourer’s wages out of the poor-rate is degrading to the labourer, making paupers alike of the good and the bad, the industrious and the idle; that it tends directly to lower the general rate of wages to a bare sufficiency for the support of a single man; and while it is oppressive to the single man, at the same time offers the most positive encouragement to improvident and inconsiderate marriage; that it is unjust in principle, inasmuch as it presses heavily on the small farmer, the shopkeeper, and the other respectable rate-payers, who employ few or no hands, obliging them to contribute a larger proportion towards the poor-rates than the more extensive occupiers of land. That the magistrates of this county are determined to put an effectual stop to a practice avowedly illegal. They therefore intend, in future, to refuse to pass the accounts of any parish, unless the overseers certify upon oath that no such illegal payments have been made to farmers’ labourers; and they recommend to rate-payers in any parish in the county aggrieved by such illegal payments to bring an appeal against its entry in the parish books before the general quarter sessions.”

Mr. Cherry favoured me with the following copy of a report of the appeal made to the Hampshire bench of magistrates against allowances made from the poor’s-rates in aid of wages. The Earl of Carnarvon and a full bench of magistrates were present on the occasion:—

“The Rev. Henry Wake and the Churchwarden and Overseers of the Parish of Over Wallop.

“This case, which was heard on Wednesday, April 21, 1819, excited much interest on account of the important consequences which it involved. It was an appeal from the Rev. Henry Wake, rector of the parish of Over Wallop, against the allowance of the late overseers’ (Richard Titt and Richard Holloway) accounts, in relation to certain payments made by them to several individuals belonging to the parish, which the appellant contended were illegal, as the said persons did not come under that description authorized by the statute.

“In support of the appeal it was stated, that the farmers of Over Wallop had instructed the overseers to make out a list of the labourers, and to distribute them according to the proportion of the rate. This is termed *stemming*. The rate, at 2 s. in the pound, amounted to 150 l., and there were about 50 labourers. The appellant’s assessment, at 2 s. in the pound, amounted to nearly one-fourth of the whole rate; and though he had but 40 acres (glebe included) in his own occupation, under this system he would have 12 labourers allotted to him, while the principal landholder in the parish (Brownjohn), who occupied three farms, containing in the aggregate 1,400 acres and upwards, and of which the greater part is arable, would have allotted to him the number, viz. 12 men! On account of the lateness of the hour, the counsel for the appellant said they would not fatigue the court by calling more than seven witnesses. The object was not so much to get a large sum disallowed, as to abolish the system altogether.

“The first witness called was John Baker, who deposed that he was married, and had a wife and five children. He worked for farmer Robert Barnes in the month of March 1818; received 6 s. per week; in the winter of 1817 he had 9 s., and sometimes 10 s. At Christmas 1816 he was paid either 9 s. or 10 s., but during the last year he only got from Mr. Barnes 6 s. He could not subsist on this, and went to Mr. Hollen, the then acting overseer, for some more money, who made it up 12 s. 6 d., which was about the price of a gallon loaf and 6 d. a head. Last April he received but 6 s., and went to Mr. Titt, who was overseer at the time, for money, who made him the same allowance. The year before he received 10 s. a week. Mr. Robert Barnes told him to go to the overseer for work, as he had no employment for him; at this time there were two or three ricks in his barn unthrashed. On going to the overseer, he was desired to return to Mr. Barnes, who then employed him at 6 s. a week; the rest he got from the overseer, which was more than at the rate of 10 s., as he received 4 s. a week in addition to bread-money, and 6 d. for each child. He did not ask for relief; and if he could have earned 10 s. at that time, he should not have expected the weekly allowance of 4 s. from the overseer. In the harvest and grass-mowing season he earned 10 s.; during that period he did not apply to the overseer. Last winter he was employed in grubbing for Mr. Cowdery by the piece; was to have 1 s. a lug, and go to the overseer for the weekly allowance of 4 s., like the rest of the parish. Before last Christmas the payment of the 4 s. was discontinued by Mr. Titt, who told him to go before the magistrates at Andover, to apply for relief. The witness replied, he could not ask for relief, because, when he worked for himself, he reckoned his labour worth 10 s. a week. He afterwards went to Andover, but not before the magistrates. On the Monday, however, he received his money at Mr. Titt’s house. About two months since he applied to Mr. Titt, at the

* Resolution first of all proposed to be moved by me, afterwards abandoned for Mr. Scrope’s:—

“That great injustice is done to the labouring class, as well as the respectable rate-payers who give good wages to the labourers, and to those who employ none, by the practice of supporting out of the poor-rate the families of those labourers whose employers refuse to pay them adequate wages; that the magistrates of this county are determined to do all in their power to put a stop to a practice at once unjust and illegal, the law of Elizabeth authorizing no parish relief to able-bodied men, except in the shape of work to be found for ‘those who have no means to maintain them, and use no ordinary and daily trade.’ The sessions, therefore, strongly recommend to magistrates of divisions, on all future occasions, to be very particular in passing overseers’ accounts, and to examine on oath such overseers, previous to the allowance of their accounts, whether any such illegal payments have been made to farmers’ labourers; and they recommend also to rate-payers in any parish in the county aggrieved by such illegal payments to appeal against the accounts to the general quarter sessions.”

the church, who told him it was of no use to come there unless he came for relief. He was forced to say he wanted relief, otherwise his wife and children must be starved; he really would not have asked for relief, had he been paid what he considered a fair remuneration for his labour, namely 10 s. per week, which was the price at which it is estimated in Over Wallop parish.

"The next witness examined was Harry Bevis, who stated that he was 55 years of age, and had a wife and one daughter, aged 27, whom he supported. In April 1818, he worked for Mr. Self, at 6 s. per week; at the end of the month he went to the overseers, and was paid 16 s.; he afterwards went to Mr. Hillary on the same terms; was subsequently employed to thrash barley at 1 s. 6 d. per quarter, and received the same allowance from the overseer; Mr. Holloway had employed him at the same rate, and he went to the poor-book for the rest; he went to Mr. Holloway's house, and afterwards to the church, and said he came there for money, the same as others; he should not have thrashed the barley at 1 s. 6 d. per quarter if it had not been understood he was to receive an allowance from the poor-book; he should have been paid 2 s. 3 d., instead of 1 s. 6 d. per quarter. The witness was employed subsequently by other farmers on the same terms. He recollected Mr. Titt once asking him if he could support himself, his wife and daughter on 6 s. per week? he replied, he could not. Titt then asked him if he could get more? he answered, no, 1 s. a day being all that was given in the parish. He remembered Mr. Titt's refusing to give him relief unless he went before a magistrate. He accordingly went to Andover, before the clerks only, and nothing was done there; he then returned to his parish, and continued to receive 4 s. a week.

"This was the substance of the evidence, and the testimony of five other witnesses was nearly of a similar import.

"The learned chairman having observed upon the evidence, the court were unanimously of opinion that the payment of a portion of the labourer's wages out of the poor's-rate was illegal, and should be disallowed.

"It was suggested that the accounts should be referred to two magistrates, or to two counsel out of court, to fix the sum to be disallowed; but the counsel for the respondents having expressed a wish that a particular sum should be named, 25 l. was mentioned, to which Mr. Wake instantly assented; and the late overseers were directed to pay over that sum, together with the balance remaining in their hands, to the succeeding overseers of the parish.

"The noble chairman then, at the request of the magistrates, rose to express his most pointed reprobation of the baneful practice adopted by this parish, of eking out the wages of the peasant's labour from the poor-book. This unjust system, he observed with regret, was daily becoming more prevalent. It pressed hard upon the small farmer and the shopkeeper; in short, upon every resident in the parish. It was radically bad in principle, and extremely dishonest in practice; and a system more detrimental and injurious to every class of the community certainly could not be devised; and he sincerely hoped that the decision upon this case would check its further progress, and accelerate its entire abolition.

"Counsel for the appellant, Mr. Selwyn and Mr. Pollen; attorney, Mr. Coles, Andover. Counsel for the respondents, Mr. Missing, sen. and Mr. Carter; attorney, Mr. Hodding, Salisbury."

GREAT FARRINGTON, BERKS.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	2,153	2,343	4,842	3,033

		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the Relief of the Poor	-	£. 1,804	£. 1,885	£. 1,852	£. 2,227	£. 3,103	£. 3,067

Mr. Charles Price, Contractor for the Maintenance of the Poor of the Parish of Farringdon, Examined.

"In May 1832 I contracted with the visitor and guardians of the parish of Farringdon to maintain the whole of the in-door and the out-door poor for the sum of 2,200 l., which was about 600 l. less than they had cost the parish during the two previous years. I have contracted to provide good and sufficient clothing for all the persons then in the poor-house, or who should be admitted during the year, and also good and sufficient diet for all such persons; and in particular will allow them good meat dinners three days at the least in each week, and will from time to time provide for them sufficient vegetables, beer, bread, cheese and other necessaries, of good quality, and also provide for such of the said poor persons as may be sick diet of mutton, or such other diet as shall be suitable, (except medicines and medical advice), and generally will supply, during the said term, all things necessary for the use of the poor for the time being in the poor-house: that as to such of the poor called out-door poor, entitled to relief from the said parish, but not being in the poor-house, the said Charles Price will, during the said term, make to such poor persons, for their maintenance, such allowances as shall be directed by the said visitor and guardians, by writing signed by them, whether by a general scale of allowances or by directions to be made from time to time, and applicable to any particular case, he the said Charles Price having the benefit of the labour of such poor persons. The diet ordered consisted of upwards of 280

Contract system.
Pecuniary saving
by the introduction
of the system.

Nature of the labour found; some of it unprofitable, per se.

ounces of solid food weekly, exclusive of vegetables. The work I found was shore-digging and breaking for the roads. When I had more hands than I could find employment for in this way, I employed them in moving stones from one part of the yard to the other.

Are you not aware that such employment produces a mischievous effect; that is, produces irritation at the useless employment?—Yes, I am aware of it, and I have studiously endeavoured to give all this employment the appearance of use, and I believe I have succeeded.

Effects of finding labour for the able-bodied.

What was the effect produced by the labour?—It got rid of about one-third of the able-bodied labourers. The whole of these labourers were out-door paupers. I at the same time made it a rule to offer the house to single men who are able-bodied labourers. Their course was usually to stay in the house a day or two and then go away; sometimes they would go away immediately.

Notwithstanding that the diet of the workhouse amounts to 280 ounces of food weekly, exclusive of vegetables?—Yes; they did not like the confinement, nor do they like some sorts of food, such as gruel for breakfast.

To what classes of men the workhouse was offered.

Did you offer the workhouse invariably?—I did not offer it to married men; not on account of any objections on my part, but chiefly on account of objections on the parts of the parishioners to regulations such as I should have enforced. The parishioners would probably object to the husband being prevented from sleeping with his wife. I have kept the married separate. Before I took the contract the married paupers were allowed to sleep together; and the consequence was, an increase of the pauper stock.

Then you have acted on the principle that the parish must always be the hardest task master and the worst paymaster that an indolent man can have recourse to?—I have.

Do you conceive that piece-work may always be had to carry that principle into effect?—Where piece-work can be enforced, so as to make the parish the hardest taskmaster and the worst paymaster, piece-work is the best; but as this cannot always be had, I conceive that a well-regulated workhouse is a necessary instrument for dispauperizing a district.

A well-regulated workhouse a necessary instrument in dispauperizing a district.

Did you ever, when you had piece-work, offer the workhouse in preference?—In the case of the single men I did, because when I took the single men in the workhouse, and gave them no wages, I could keep them for less in the workhouse; that is to say, their food cost less than the wages I should have to give them as out-door paupers, working by the piece. The married men brought more mouths with them, and thus it was dearer to me to take them into the house than to employ and pay them as out-door labourers.

Paupers' notion of the hours of pauper-labour as being less than those of independent labourers.

How did you enforce work on the in-door paupers?—Chiefly by admonition. Their labour was, as might be expected, very slack comparatively. I however insisted that they should work during the same time as the independent labourers. This they resisted, and appealed to the magistrates against this usage. The ground of their appeal was, that it was a thing unknown before in this parish, or any other, that parish labourers should work as long or as hard as the other classes of labourers. The Earl of Radnor and Lord Barington, who were both on the bench, confirmed the regulation.

Workhouse regulations and piece-work out of the house ought to be made jointly available.

What is the result of your experience as to the comparative value of workhouse regulations and piece-work out of the house?—My opinion is, decidedly, that they ought to be combined, to produce the effect.

What wages did you pay?—The wages I paid were, under the circumstances, the fair average wages. I paid these wages because I had much opposition to encounter, and I was desirous of effecting the alteration quietly.

But if you had been enabled to make the parish, in every instance, by far the worst paymaster and the hardest taskmaster; if, for example, you had been authorized or required to give low wages, not in money but in kind; if you had given a certain quantity of brown bread, or other substantial food, to the pauper, so as to make his condition less eligible than that of the independent labourer, what do you conceive would have been the result in your parish?—I think the effect would have been that we should have got rid of at least half the number instead of one-third, and that all the other advantages would have followed in the same proportion.

What do you find to be the obstacles to such strict management?—Chiefly the ignorance of some of the parishioners, who conceive that such a course is severe and oppressive to the poor, to whom it is in reality the most humane and beneficial.

Adjacent parishes aware of the advantageous effects of the change of management.

The surrounding parishes are of course aware of the effects produced in your parish by the change of system?—They are quite aware of them.

Severely burthened.

Are those parishes heavily or lightly burthened?—Most heavily burthened. Property is a great deal deteriorated in value in consequence of the progress of pauperism. One gentleman, the other day, mentioned to me that lately, in consequence of the heavy burthen of the poor's-rates, by which, for the last two or three years, he had lost upwards of a hundred a year upon the farm his family had held for upwards of two centuries, he had thrown up that farm, and gone to another parish, which was not yet so heavily burthened with poor's-rates. I know that in the surrounding parishes capital is fearfully diminishing, and property deteriorating.

But they take no steps to follow the example.

Are you aware of any steps being taken in those parishes to follow the example of your parish?—I am not aware of any steps being taken to follow the example. I have indeed heard some persons say they should be very glad to see the same system followed.

What

What are the obstacles which stand in the way of their following it?—Partly fear, and partly the want of persons of influence and energy to come forward to take the first steps. *The obstacles fear, and the want of persons of influence and energy to take the first steps.*

If legislative measures were taken for the adoption of such a system as that adverted to by you, do you think that the obstacles, fear and the want of persons ready to make sacrifices, would be found to prevent their execution?—If the adoption of the measures were not enforced by some strong means, I do not believe they would be extensively carried into effect voluntarily. *Legislative enactments would not be adopted, unless strong means were taken to enforce them.*

Did the roundsman or billeting system ever prevail in your parish?—Yes, it did. *Effect of the billeting or labour-rate system in this parish.*

What were its effects?—Very bad. I cannot take upon myself to state what was the first effect; but the farmers complained that it greatly deteriorated the value of the labourers; it rendered the decent labourers indolent, and careless of working properly; they were also extremely insolent. When their labour was found fault with, the common reply was, "If you don't like it, you can get somebody else; I can go to the house (meaning the workhouse), and get my money."

What have been the chief effects of the change of system?—That the system of making up the wages from the rates has been completely put an end to. We offer to take the surplus number of children beyond the third into the house; to those who have a small number of children we offer parish-work; the single men are taken in the house. All the frauds consequent upon the allowance system have been put an end to; and it is generally remarked, that the condition of the labouring classes has been morally and physically improved. During the last month, since it has been ascertained that the contract system would be continued, the behaviour of the pauperized classes has greatly improved. During the preceding month they were very mutinous, with the view of thwarting the new system.

What has been the effect in respect of marriages?—It has been remarked that there are fewer marriages than in previous years; but the change has not perhaps been in operation a sufficient length of time to produce the full effect. During the last twelvemonths, however, we had only two cases of bastardy; whereas the average, for the previous years, has been about six or seven. This alteration has been remarked as the result of the change of system. *Improvident marriages reduced.*

How are the shopkeepers satisfied?—I purchase in the parish all the goods I consume; and there has been no opposition, on their parts, against the renewal of the contract system; only a few opposed the renewal of the contract, for the sake of the patronage. The publicans have, however, in some instances, complained that the labourers have not so much money to spend now that they used to have. *The improved system opposed by the publicans.*

At the commencement of the contract system here, I certainly had to contend with a great deal of prejudice from some of the tradesmen in the town, which may be readily accounted for, it having been the practice here, as well as in many other neighbouring parishes, for the overseers and guardians to supply the workhouse with goods necessary for the inmates, and in too many instances at enormous profits.

One source of reduction was from the closer investigation I made into the cases of the applicants. The following are instances of the frauds which prevailed under the old system:

A man, named Henry Larnder, with a family of four children, had been receiving parochial relief for several years, at the rate of 10s. per week. It was believed that he was labouring under such a severe asthma that he was unfit to do any laborious work; but the fact is, that he used to go about pig dealing, &c., and was in the habit of earning from 10s. to 15s. per week. Upon my coming his name was mentioned to me by one of the rate-payers, when I immediately made an inquiry into the particulars of the case, which quite confirmed my previous information, and I then offered himself and family the poor-house, conceiving it the most proper place for them, as in that case I could have the benefit of his wife's and children's labour; he declined coming into the poor-house, and in about a fortnight purchased a horse and cart, and since then has hired some land, and living in credit.

The wife of a man, named Robert Ford, living about seven miles from this place, came to me on a Friday afternoon, saying that her husband was confined to his bed with a severe attack of inflammatory fever, and required relief, as he was unable to work at his trade, a shoemaker, for more than a fortnight past. I said that I would call in a day or so to see him, which I do on every application of a non-resident for relief, conceiving that those are the cases that parish officers are most likely to be imposed on, especially in distant places such as this, (seven miles,) the distance being such as would take up too much of their time to make the proper inquiry. On the following morning I went and found him at work with a shoe half made before him. I said, "Why, Ford, you astonish me; your wife said only yesterday that you was confined to your bed with fever." He replied that he was a little better, and was coming to Farringdon to see the doctor. I requested him to call on me on his way there, and I would go with him. I presume the sight of me cured him, as I never saw him afterwards.

A woman, named Mary Lawrence, living at Abingdon, 14 miles distant, called to say that her child was lying very ill, and confined to its bed with small-pox, and that she must have immediate relief, for that she could not bring the child to me on account of the disorder that it had got. I said, that previous to giving any relief my practice was to go and examine the case; accordingly I went to Abingdon the next morning, accompanied by a surgeon, and inquired about the said child; the woman appeared quite astounded, and said the child was at the door; and, upon a little search, we found it in perfect health, and playing

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

DISPAUPERISED
PARISHES.

BERKS.

playing with several other children in the street. I could mention several other cases of a similar fraudulent character, but I dare to say the foregoing will serve the present purpose.

I found very great abuse under the head of bastardy. I have removed several names from off the bastardy list, who were receiving from 1 s. 6d. to 2 s. per week, and finding each case was earning their own living; viz. Mary Blackall, Jane Hoare, E. Stepp, Jane Macabie, Dinah Law, Maria Pyman, and John Stratford: three of the above are in service, and each of them more than 17 years of age.

And then comes the negligence of parish officers in not compelling the reputed fathers to keep up their payments, which is great indeed. The fact is, generally speaking, parish officers are small rate-payers, consequently do not feel much interested in the distribution of the funds collected, and also they are usually too much engaged in their own private business to pay the attention that the office requires. I should state, without hesitation, that at least half the amount, as specified in the various orders of affiliation, are not collected, owing principally to the want of proper attention in the parish officers, whose duty it is to see the rates properly administered.

I found that, on the parts of the labourers, intimidation was used to a very serious extent, and I had several acts of intimidation exhibited towards myself during the past year; for instance, I had not been in office more than nine or ten days when some of the out-door labourers, who were at work for the parish, erected a gibbet, (composed of the wood planks used in their work,) in the stone quarry, the usual place of work, adjoining the poor-house. I said to the labourer who stood near the spot, that his wheeling-plank was placed in an improper position, when another labourer answered, that "We are going to have a hanging day at Farringdon, and thought that they could not do better than begin with me for the first." This I suppressed. When I went round to the cottages of the labourers that were at work for the parish, to ascertain the number of children they had, (it being usual to pay them in proportion to their families,) in several instances I discovered one, two or three children more than they had at home, and which they were receiving relief for. Finding that these frauds were detected by me, several of them threatened to knock my brains out, and said that I only went to their cottages to have connexion with their wives and children during their absence. During the same week there were several letters sent, threatening to burn the poor-house, barns, stacks of hay, corn, &c. belonging to the principal rate-payers.

The contract system being found to operate so beneficially in this parish, having saved the rate-payers 600*l.* or more, the officers have recently renewed a contract with me for another year, and in probability shall effect a further saving of from 400*l.* to 500*l.*

R. W. Crowdy, Esq. the Deputy Visitor of the workhouse, states:—

"Among the improvements now developing themselves under our new contract system are the following.

"The contractor having a personal pecuniary interest in inquiring into the real condition of the parties applying for relief, has extensive opportunities of discovering who are and who are not worthy of that relief being extended to them; he is thus enabled to find out many impositions of those who have hitherto been constant claimants on the parish funds, and who have been indifferent in seeking that employment which they might otherwise obtain where there is no parochial assistance to depend on.

"The contract system has also another good effect as regards pauper parishioners, who are residing in different parts of the country. It has been hitherto the practice of the parish officers, on application to them, through letters or otherwise, from these distant out-paupers, to forward them some relief, in many cases under the threat of their throwing themselves and their numerous families on the parish. Such relief has been extended to them without first ascertaining whether they were really in want of it. Under the new system the contractor finds it to be his interest to make all due previous inquiries on the subject, and has in many instances succeeded in discovering various frauds and impositions which were under the old system submitted to, to avoid the trouble and expense attending the inquiry.

"The contractor invariably refuses money relief to able-bodied men and boys: he offers them work, and it is only on the condition of their accepting it that he extends relief to them. We experienced much obloquy and ill-will from various quarters on the first working of the new system, but it is now fast wearing away.

"From the long practical experience of Mr. Price, the contractor in parish affairs, and the success that has already attended his efforts to check the indiscriminate and improvident expenditure of the parochial funds; the withdrawing relief, except to those who are really deserving objects, and finding employment for the able bodied who are ready and willing to work, and refusing all relief to those who neglect to seek out employment, or neglecting it when found for them; we entertain grounded hopes that we may look forward to a more regular and beneficial management of the pauper poor of our parish.

"I am an advocate for the contract system, and I firmly believe if it was generally extended to all other parishes, under good management and control, it would go far to regenerate the present, (with few exceptions,) general and improvident system."

BISHOP'S HATFIELD (HERTS).

Appendix (A.)

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

HERTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY Expended on Relief of the P O O R.	
	In- habited.	Unin- habited.	Build- ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.		
1801	—	—	—	—	—	2,442	—	—		£.
1811	—	—	—	—	—	2,677	—	—	1776	773
1821	584	14	6	1,615	1,600	3,215	670	—	1803	1,338
1831	631	4	—	1,851	1,742	3,593	671	904	1813	2,273
									1815	2,210
									1821	2,268
									1822	1,791
									1823	1,559
									1824	1,862
									1825	1,534
									1826	1,804
									1827	2,281
									1828	1,575
									1829	2,050
									1830	2,060
									1831	2,031
									1832	1,810
REAL PROPERTY, Amount of, in 1815 - - - - £. 16,996.										

Expense per Head on the whole Population, estimated by the nearest Census - - }	in	1803	-	-	-	-	-	10 s. 11 d.
		1813	-	-	-	-	-	16 s. 11 d.
		1821	-	-	-	-	-	14 s. 1 d.
		1831	-	-	-	-	-	11 s. 3 d.

IN consequence of the information with relation to Bishop's Hatfield, given in the Evidence of the Rev. F. J. Faithfull before the Committee of the House of Lords, which sat in 1830 to inquire into the administration of the Poor Laws, I visited this parish in October last, with the intention of ascertaining what had been the progress of the parish since that evidence had been given, and also of comparing the effects of the change of system which had there been accomplished, with the effects produced by the changes made in Cookham and other parishes which I had previously visited. The examination of the rector of the parish, permanent overseer, together with the copy of the rules and regulations and the forms of accounts, will, I conceive, be found to contain ample information on these points.

Mr. John Bridgens, permanent Overseer of the Parish of Bishop's Hatfield,
Herts, Examined.

I was drill-serjeant and paymaster-serjeant in the Coldstream Guards. I am now serjeant-major of the Hertfordshire Militia. I have held the situation of permanent overseer of this parish 14 years next March. I was brought here by the Marquis of Salisbury to manage the workhouse for him during the three years that he undertook the management of the poor's-rates of the parish.

Before I came here there were 6s. or 7s. rates on three-fifths of the rack-rent in the year. The affairs of the parish were then managed by an open vestry; the rates were still advancing. I have been informed that at one of the vestries his Lordship stated that he thought the parish was badly managed, and that by the adoption of a better system, and by employing a permanent overseer, the rates might be greatly reduced. Some of the rate-payers asked, "Who would ensure them that they would not lose by the experiment?" His Lordship said, he would undertake that they should have to pay only five rates in the year if the management were left to him. The majority of the parish took him at his word. The first step was, to get a select vestry.

Before his Lordship took upon himself the management of the parish, there were great numbers of able-bodied men on the parish who were allowed to do just as they pleased; there was very little notice taken of them; there was no systematic mode of keeping the parish books. I never could see any workhouse regulations or system in any part of the management, either with relation to the out-door or the in-door poor. Four or five of the parish

Appendix (A)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

Every thing at the
outset of the change
was to be done anew.

officers attended to the roads, which were, as I am informed, badly attended to. Every thing had to be done anew, and the system of management as set forth in the Book of Regulations, with the various modes of keeping the accounts, was devised by his Lordship.

(COPY.)

“REGULATIONS for the MANAGEMENT of the POOR of the Parish of *Hatfield*,
established in the year 1820.

“A SELECT vestry shall be annually appointed, agreeably to the provisions of the Act of 59 Geo. III. c. 12.

“*Their Duties shall be as follows:—*

“They shall meet at the workhouse or in the church once in every fortnight.

“At their meetings they shall consider all cases brought before them, and order such relief as they may deem requisite; being however guided by the regulations hereafter laid down. They shall further consider and determine upon all matters relating to the parish, as far as the provisions of the 59 Geo. III. c. 12. will permit.

“A vestry clerk shall be appointed, at a salary of 15*l.* per annum, with the following duties:—To attend all vestries; to enter all minutes of proceedings into the vestry book; to prepare all rates, summonses, examinations, &c. for the use of the parish.

“When any particular parochial business is to be transacted, the vestry clerk shall send a notice to all the members of the select vestry.

“A medical man shall be appointed, at a salary of 55*l.* per annum, who shall attend all the poor within the parish, and within four miles of the parish church, and furnish them with medicines, except cases of accident and women in labour.

“A permanent overseer shall be appointed, at a salary of 50*l.* per annum, with board and lodging for himself and family. The sole distribution of relief under the orders of the select vestry shall be placed in his hands. He shall also be governor of the workhouse. He shall perform all the duties of the annual overseers, with the exception of the collection of the rates, which shall be left in their hands. He shall, with the same exception, discharge all the duties of stonewardens.

“The rates shall be called in church, on the first Sunday after a quarter-day.

“*Administration of Relief to the Poor.*

“No pension or permanent allowance shall be granted henceforth to any person out of the workhouse.

“All persons who shall have been established as pensioners before the commencement of this system, shall attend at the first meetings of the select vestry next after Michaelmas and Lady-days.

“All pensioners who shall not attend, or who shall not give a reasonable excuse for non-attendance, shall forfeit their pension.

“The workhouse shall be made sufficient to receive all persons whom the select vestry shall deem fit objects for admission.

“No relief shall be given to any person on account of the number of his or her family, except by the admission of one or more of the children, as may seem fit to the select vestry, into the workhouse.”

Have you received many children under this rule?—No; this very rarely takes place; they do not like to separate from the children. We have not had a dozen children these fourteen years.

“No relief shall be granted to any person residing beyond the limits of the attendance of the parish apothecary, who shall not bring or send a certificate of his or her illness, signed by the churchwarden or overseer of the place where he or she reside, or by a respectable medical man in the neighbourhood.

“All relief shall be given in provisions or necessaries, except by especial order of the select vestry, when the reason of their order shall be entered in their minutes.

“Relief out of the workhouse shall be given only in cases of sickness and infirmity; with the following exceptions:—

“When the child of a parishioner has been placed in service, out of the parish, and is approved of by his master, he may be clothed at the expense of the parish, in such manner as the select vestry may deem fit.

“Any sum not exceeding five shillings in provisions or necessaries, may be given to women in their confinement, in lieu of providing a midwife, when the select vestry may deem it necessary.

“Compensation, at the discretion of the select vestry, may be made to persons attending others in sickness.

“The expenses of funerals may be defrayed by the parish.”

Are the paupers buried in a respectable or costly way?—They are invariably buried as paupers; unless we did this, we should have to bury the whole parish.

“Widows or families may, at the discretion of the select vestry, receive relief out of the workhouse, for one month after the death of the master of the family, but no longer.

“Every case of application for relief, whether granted or refused, shall be entered into the vestry-book, with the cause of such application.”

What is the general nature of these cases?—The cases of relief are, sickness, on the doctor's order, lying-in; provisions always given. Occasional relief to old age not in the workhouse.

“A list shall be made out annually of all persons who have received parish relief, stating their residence and the amount which they have each of them received; and copies shall be affixed to the church-doors in large and legible characters, on the Sunday immediately after the passing of the annual accounts.

“The family of a person sent to gaol, for any crime or misdemeanor, or under suspicion of the same, shall not be relieved, except by admission into the workhouse.”

Mr. Bridgens.—I consider this a most useful order; we have never had but one or two families since I have been here.

No relief given to
persons who have
families otherwise
than by taking one
or more into the
workhouse.

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" Relief in Sickness.

" The Form of obtaining relief in sickness shall be as follows:—

" Application shall be made by the party to the permanent overseer, who is bound to give an order for the attendance of the parish apothecary.

" ' Sir,

" ' You are requested to visit at and if you think that any relief in provisions or necessities is advisable to be given, you will have the goodness to order it on this paper, and sign it with your name.

" ' I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

Permanent Overseer.

" ' N. B.—It is particularly requested that you will not order money.'

" At all meetings of the select vestry, a list shall be laid before them of the persons who have applied for medical attendance between their meetings.

" The parish apothecary may order relief, in cases of emergency, until the next meeting of the select vestry, when it is his duty to report the case for their consideration.

" The hours for distributing relief for sickness shall be on Thursday, from 9 till 12 o'clock, except in cases of great emergency."

" Providing Labour.

" All parishioners wanting work shall, upon application to the permanent overseer, receive a paper, to which they shall obtain the signature of twenty of the farmers of the parish, commencing with the person with whom they last worked, if they were employed within the parish, who is requested to state the cause of their discharge. When they bring back the papers, properly signed, they shall be set to such work as the permanent overseer may think fit, or the select vestry may direct.

" N. B.—It shall only be required of women who apply for a working paper, that it should be signed by the person who last employed them.

(FORM.)

" ' THE bearer of this paper has applied to me for work. It is therefore particularly requested that you will have the goodness to certify your inability to furnish him with it, and also to state if he has refused work of any kind. The person with whom he last worked is requested to sign the paper first, with the cause of his discharge.

" ' From your obedient servant,

Permanent Overseer.

" ' Dated

of

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NAMES.	OBSERVATIONS.	NAMES.	OBSERVATIONS.

Do the farmers comply with these forms regularly?—Yes, they do; and this form of certificate I find extremely useful, as it enables me to ascertain the character of almost every labouring man in the parish who applies to me for work. If he has been discharged for misconduct or for working badly, that is usually stated as the cause of the discharge. The certificate also serves to ensure that the party has really sought for work. [I may here observe that it was stated to me, in the parish of Speen, Berks, that the enforcement of a similar regulation was attempted, but that the farmers would never give themselves the trouble to sign the certificates.]

Do the labourers ever go out of your parish to seek work?—No, they know it would be of no use; they are certain of it, as it is a general understanding in this part of the country that each parish shall employ its own poor.

" All persons, except women, employed by the parish, under the age of fifty, shall be employed in task work.

" The value of the work done by them shall be calculated at five-sixths of the common rate of wages for such work.

" Persons above the age of fifty may be employed in such work as is not capable of being measured, but the wages of their labour shall be one-sixth below the common rate of wages.

" The youngest men shall always be put to the hardest work, but no difference whatever shall be made between the wages of a married or a single man on that account."

Mr. Bridgens.—We have never had this rule carried into effect, as we considered that the operation would not be beneficial.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

DISPAUPERIZED
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HERTS.

All persons
employed at task-
work.
At five-sixths of the
common rate of
wages.

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Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
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"When any man shall have been discharged by his employer for gross misconduct, it shall be lawful for the select vestry to reduce the rate of his wages, whether by task or day labour, to any sum not less than one-half of the common rate of wages."

What is the effect of this regulation?—If a farmer wants a man at any time, he sends to me for one. In the winter time, when there is an influx of hands, we think it unnecessary to enforce this regulation; at other times, we do occasionally get rid of two or three hands when they go round.

Not more?—No.

"No person shall be employed by the parish for more than six weeks without being again sent round with a paper for a signature.

"A field

DIET TABLE of HATFIELD POOR HOUSE,

DAYS OF THE WEEK.	MEN, for BREAKFAST.	WOMEN, for BREAKFAST.	CHILDREN, for BREAKFAST.	MEN, for DINNER.	WOMEN, for DINNER.
Monday	<i>At Work.</i> -- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of bread and 4 ozs. of cheese is taken with them each day, for breakfast and dinner. These at home, milk porridge.	-- 1 lb. of bread per day, 1 oz. of tea, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter, and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of sugar, for the week, for breakfast and dinner, each day.	Milk porridge	Bread and cheese	Tea, bread and butter.
Tuesday	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto
Wednesday	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto
Thursday	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto
Friday	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto
Saturday	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto	- ditto
Sunday	- Milk porridge for all the men, there being none at work.	- ditto	- ditto	- 8 ozs. of meat with potatoes & other vegetables.	- 8 ozs. of Meat with potatoes & other vegetables.

N. B.—Persons superintending washing and cleaning the house, with those who are very old and infirm, are allowed ale; men a pint, and women half a pint; the other persons have a pint of table beer per diem.

"Sealed tenders for flour of the 3d quality shall be delivered once in three months to the select vestry."

Is it the rule that tenders shall be taken from parishioners?—No, we take them from any place; we only prefer the tenders of tradesmen within the parish when their tenders are as low as others, and the article contracted for equally good.

"Only one sack of flour shall remain in the house at the termination of each contract for that article.

"Sealed tenders for beef without bone and mutton with bone, shall be delivered once in six months.

"All other provisions and necessities, of which the consumption is sufficient to make it an object to contract for them, shall be contracted for under the same regulations as meat.

"Ten days' notice shall be given in church before such tenders are required.

"When two tenders are offered at the same price, the last contractor shall have the preference. In other cases of equal offers, fresh tenders shall be required.

"The rest of the provisions and necessities for the use of the parish shall be purchased at wholesale prices.

"A list of the prices shall be laid before the select vestry at each of their meetings.

"A provision book shall be kept according to the annexed form.

"LODGING.

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“ A field of five acres, or not exceeding twenty, shall be rented by the parish, for the purpose of employing the poor.

“ A weekly labour book shall be kept, according to the annexed form.

“ The permanent overseer shall be authorized to contract for the execution of any work for other persons, provided the parish shall receive the profit, and not run the risk of any loss.

“ The permanent overseer may set the poor to any work which he may deem for the benefit of the parish.”

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

DISPAUPERIZED
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HERTS.

“ Workhouse.

“ PROVISIONS.—The paupers in the house shall be fed according to the annexed Table.

- - - - - for each Meal throughout the Week.

CHILDREN, for DINNER.	MEN, for SUPPER.*	WOMEN, for SUPPER.	CHILDREN, for SUPPER.	MEN.		WOMEN.	
				1st Class.	3d Class.	1st Class.	3d Class.
Bread & cheese	Peas or rice soup.	Peas or rice soup.	Peas or rice soup.	Full allow- ance.	Meat only on Sunday.	Full allow- ance.	--Tea,sugar and butter suspended, during the pleasure of the Vestry.
- ditto -	-- 8 ozs.of Meat with potatoes & other vegetables.	-- 8 ozs. of meat with potatoes & other vegetables.	-- 8 ozs. of meat with potatoes & other vegetables.				
- ditto -	Peas or rice soup.	Peas or rice soup.	Peas or rice soup.				
- ditto -	-- 8 ozs. of Meat with potatoes & other vegetables.	-- 8 ozs. of meat with potatoes & other vegetables.	-- 8 ozs. of meat with potatoes & other vegetables.				
- ditto -	Peas or rice soup.	Peas or rice soup.	Peas or rice soup.				
- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto -	- ditto.				
-- 8 oz. of meat with potatoes & other vegetables.	Bread & cheese	Tea, bread and butter.	Bread & cheese.				

* The chief meal of the labourer in this part of the country is the supper.

“ LODGING.—The House shall be divided into the following Wards :—

- No. 1.—For men.
No. 2.—For boys.
No. 3.—For women.
- No. 4.—For girls.
No. 5.—For married old people.
No. 6.—For sick, Male and Female.

“ DAY ROOMS.—Women’s room ; men’s room ; children’s room ; dining-room.

“ No person shall be suffered to sleep out of his ward under any pretence, without leave from the governor of the house.

“ The rooms shall be divided into births, each of which shall be furnished with a straw matrass, a straw pillow, two blankets, two sheets and a rug.

“ The straw in the matrasses shall be changed as often as required. The bedding of other description which is now in use, shall not be replaced when worn out.

“ The bed-rooms shall be vacated and cleaned by seven o’clock in the morning, from Lady-day to Michaelmas, and by eight o’clock from Michaelmas to Lady-day.

“ No one shall be suffered to return into them until five o’clock in the evening, without the leave of the governor of the house.

“ The two last regulations shall not apply to the sick ward.

“ Fires shall be kept in the day-rooms from Michaelmas to Lady-day, but none in the bed-rooms, except in the sick ward.

“ All persons shall be in bed by nine o’clock at night.”

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Do you find this regulation beneficial?—This regulation, and this only, we find gets rid of a great many applicants; they do not like the confinement.

“ A porter shall be appointed from amongst the paupers to attend the gates and keep them locked. None of the inmates of the house shall pass through the gates without the written permission of the governor.

Form of Pass Ticket.

The Bearer
is allowed to be absent from the Workhouse
from till
on the

"No person shall enter without his knowledge.

“No person absenting himself from the workhouse beyond the time for which leave is given to him, or sleeping out without permission, shall be again admitted until the next vestry, or by order of a magistrate.

" No beer or spirituous liquors shall be brought into the house, without the approbation of the governor of the workhouse.

“ All men and boys capable of labour, shall be employed on the parish account every day, in such work as may be directed by the governor of the house. The hours of labour shall be from six o'clock to six from Lady-day to Michaelmas, and from seven o'clock to five from Michaelmas to Lady-day.

"They shall receive 2*d.* in the shilling on the amount which they have earned.

“ The women shall do all the work of the house, and such as are placed in offices of trust shall be allowed a sum not exceeding 6*d.* per week, at the discretion of the governor.

"The children shall be employed in such work as they may be capable of performing.

“ The governor of the house shall pay into the savings bank the sum of 4*d.* weekly, for each of the children employed in the silk work or other work profitable to the parish, to be applied as may hereafter be directed by the parish. The children employed in that way may be further allowed any sum not exceeding 3*d.* per week, at the discretion of the governor of the house.

" No person neglecting the work or duty which he is appointed to perform, shall receive the usual allowance in money.

“ Whenever any silk-winding shall be carried on in the shed belonging to the parish rented by Mr. Woollam, all children capable of work shall be employed on it.

"The children shall be taught to read and write by the best schoolmistress that can be found amongst the paupers of the house.

“ The men and women shall be punished for any minor offence, by reducing them to the second or third class of diet, and depriving them of every indulgence which is allowed to others. Such punishment being always reported at the next meeting of the vestry.

" All cases of greater offence shall be brought before the select vestry.

“ These regulations shall be read to every person when admitted as an inmate of the workhouse.

"CASUAL RELIEF.—A house shall be kept for the accommodation of such vagrants as may need parish assistance; they shall be lodged and fed, but no money given to them.

“**ACCOUNTS.**—The permanent overseer shall provide the books and papers necessary for the purpose, at the expense of the parish.

“ The quarterly account shall be invariably audited, and vouchers examined at the next vestry after the quarter day, by a committee appointed for the purpose. They shall be entered in the vestry book.

“ The yearly accounts shall be submitted to the general vestry, as by law directed.

“ STONEWARDEN'S RATE.—The rate necessary for the repair of the roads shall be placed at the disposition of the permanent overseer. The whole of it shall be levied in money.

“ A cart and two horses, and also one for the use of the permanent overseer, shall be provided, and the keep of the horses paid out of the stonewarden's rate.

“ The remainder of it shall be expended as much as possible in labour. It shall not be charged with any labour that is not strictly necessary for the repair of the roads.

“ It shall be lawful for the permanent overseer to employ the paupers in the house upon the roads, at a rate not exceeding the price of their maintenance, and the 2 *d.* in the shilling allowed to them upon their earnings.

“ No person under fifty years of age, unless labouring under some infirmity, shall be employed otherwise than by task-work upon the road.

“ On the application of a parishioner, the permanent overseer shall furnish a horse and cart for the conveyance of prisoners to gaol.

“ Any work that may be done by the cart and horses for the parish, otherwise than upon the roads, shall be charged to the parish, and carried to the credit of the stonewarden's account.

“ An account of the expenditure, specifying the weekly work, and the place where it has been done, shall be kept according to the annexed form, and when passed shall be entered in the vestry book.

"None of the above resolutions shall be repealed, altered or amended, without notice of an intention to that effect being given at the previous meeting of the select vestry, and in church on the Sunday before their next meeting."

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All the regulations being new, we had considerable labour in bringing them into operation and making them habitual.

Are you aware that in framing these regulations, the experience of any other parish or of any other persons was consulted?—None, to my knowledge. It was all begun here anew.

How did the parishioners assist in carrying the regulations into effect?—They consented to the regulations proposed by his Lordship in vestry, but he carried them into effect by stating to me what I ought to do. But at the first onset many of the parishioners began to discharge their hands, and throw them on the parish.

Why did they do this, as you believe?—I do not know, unless it was to defeat his Lordship or annoy him, so as to prevent him administering the plan for the five rates.

Was it jealousy do you suppose?—Yes; I suppose it was some feeling of desire to prevent it being said, that his Lordship could manage better than they could.

Did you overcome this obstacle?—Yes, by attending to the instructions laid down by his Lordship.

Did you get rid of these extra hands?—Yes.

In what way?—By steadily giving them task-work at five-sixths the rate of wages usually paid for such work by the farmers.

Were you enabled to make the task-work as severe as it would be if they were working for others than the parish?—It was as severe; only they got a less price.

What sort of work was it?—Lifting roads, digging gravel, digging land, and any other work of that kind.

From your experience, do you believe that in the rural parishes generally piece or task-work might be equally well enforced from the able-bodied paupers?—Yes, I believe it might.

What is your present chief means of employing the labourers?—Much the same; we have forty-three miles and a half of roads to keep in repair, and that takes a great deal of labour. Last year Lord Salisbury employed all the able-bodied men of the parish in clearing out his river, which was a most beneficial thing for the parish. The great point in the employment of paupers at piece-work, is for the manager to be a good judge of the work; otherwise the paupers will be sure to cheat him. They here will do very little with any new work at the onset, in order to get the price raised; and when you have once fixed a price you must keep to it. We have had them here pretend that they have worked as hard as they could, and could get no more than 3s. or 4s. per week; that as they could not live on such a sum, the allowance ought to be raised. But as I knew that they could do more work, I have refused to give any higher sum, and the week following, when they found they could not, they have earned their 10s. or 11s. a week.

What has been the effect of making the parish the hardest taskmaster, and the worst paymaster?—The men keep in their places, and I am quite sure that they never come to the parish whilst employment elsewhere is to be got. The men are steadier and better workmen.

What effect has been produced on their wages?—The wages have improved somewhat; I cannot state exactly how much, but I believe the wages have improved by 1s. a week; they formerly got 9s. and 10s. a week, now they get about 11s. This I think is about the average of their wages here.

Have you endeavoured to put an end to the preference given to married men, or in other words, to the bounties on improvident marriages?—We do so as much as we can; we make no difference in the price of any parish work; we, however, send the young and active to the most distant work.

Do the farmers in the parish make any stated difference in the pay of the married and the single?—They do not make any stated difference, but in general the married men do get the better wages, as they are usually the better workmen.

What has been the effect, as regards marriages, of altering the system, and paying according to the value of each man as a labourer, so far as that has been done?—I believe they think more about marriage. They would often formerly, as I have been informed, marry without having provided a home or a bed, or any thing, leaving all to the parish. I am not aware of any such marriages having taken place recently.

What is the diet given in the workhouse, as compared with what was given before the present system of management?—I cannot speak to that.

But do not the paupers complain, and say that they fared better formerly in the house?—I never had any complaint of the present allowance, and I have heard them admit that they have more meat now than they had formerly, and a great deal more of comforts.

What is the present expense of the keep of the paupers in the workhouse per head?—About 2s. 11d. or 3s.

For how many?—On the average, about 100 or 105.

What was the expense formerly?—I believe it was about 4s. 6d. or 4s. 9d.

For how many?—I think there were about 60 or 70.

Could you keep 60 or 70 at the same rate per head that you now keep 100?—I think I could keep them for about a penny per head more.

What is the condition of the paupers in this house as to food and comforts, clothing and lodging, as compared with the condition of labourers living on their own earnings, or the fruits of independent labour, in this parish?—We have only old people and young children, who could not earn their own livings out of the house, but I believe that they live as well or better than any labourer can live, and I am quite sure that they sleep much more comfortably

Appendix (A.)

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DISPAUPERIZED PARISHES.

HERTS.

At the outset, many of the parishioners began to discharge their labourers.

No reason for this, but to defeat the change.

Got rid of the extra hands by giving them task-work, at five-sixths of the farmers' wages.

The task-work as severe as farmers' work.

Unless the manager be a good judge of piece-work, the paupers will be sure to cheat him.

Effects of making the parish the hardest taskmaster, and the worst paymaster.

The men keep their places better, and are better workmen.

Their wages are improved.

Married men being better workmen, get the better wages.

The labourers do not marry so recklessly.

Paupers more comfortable in the workhouse than formerly.

Present expense, per head, of paupers in the workhouse.

Past expense.

Condition of the paupers in the workhouse.

More comfortable than that of the labourer in the parish.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

*Eight ounces of un-
cooked meat per head
more than the paupers
can eat.*

*Calumnious story
against the change.*

fortably. Their bedding is better, and their sleeping-place more clean and comfortable than that of the labourer in the parish. I am quite sure of that.

Do you think the children in your house live as well as the labourers' children in the parish?—Better, or quite as well at least. They have milk pottage every morning, which the labourers' children cannot get, and there is no stint of meat whatever.

What quantity of meat do you find suffice for the inmates of your house, you having, as you state, no stint?—I apportion 8 ounces of meat before it is cooked to each person; 50 pounds of meat is cooked, and the remainder is served out to 100 people, and that three times a week. Although they have as much as they can eat, I always take some away.

Was there any outcry amongst the labouring classes against the present system of management?—No, there was no outcry; only it was a new system, and they did not approve of it at the onset. There was a story raised that his Lordship intended to make them feed on red herrings and potatoes, which story was occasioned by his Lordship having ordered two barrels of red herrings, not as a substitute for the ordinary diet, but as an addition to it, and an indulgence. This was a few days after his Lordship took upon himself the parochial management; at that time it was the practice for the paupers to go in and out of the workhouse just as they pleased. Red herrings were then sold at a halfpenny apiece, and some of the old women, when they got halfpence occasionally, went to the shop of Mr. Mawe, who kept the Post Office, and purchased a herring. His Lordship happened to observe this, and he inquired of me how it was, and whether the old women were fond of herrings. I answered that they were; when his Lordship said, that to save them from spending their odd halfpence, which they might want for other comforts, he would send them some in, and he ordered in the two barrels. He ordered me to give them to the old women or men at 11 o'clock, or at any time they might want such a thing. Some persons, who knew nothing of the circumstance further than that his Lordship had ordered in a quantity of red herrings, circulated the report that he intended to feed the people upon them. A great use of this falsehood was made at elections, and when his Lordship has appeared at public meetings, the mob have shouted out, "Red herrings and potatoes!" Nothing, however, of this sort was heard at Hatfield; it was only at a distance that the falsehood obtained circulation.

Was the practice of giving the red herrings continued?—No, the two barrels lasted a long time. The old women began to get tired of them, and as such a use had been made of the fact, his Lordship did not order in any more.

*The change could
only have been ef-
fected by a person of
considerable power
and leisure and talent.*

Would any one, who had not the means of employing labourers that his Lordship had, nor the power, and influence, and leisure, and energy, and talent, have been able to effect such a change in the management of the parish?—A person who had not the influence of his Lordship would certainly have met with very great difficulties, and would not have received the support that his Lordship had. I am sure that a farmer, or a man of that class, could not have carried the change into effect.

Not even if he had equal leisure and energy and ability?—No, certainly, he could not.

Did his Lordship bestow great attention on the subject?—He was constantly engaged until he had brought the plan into effect. During the first year he was incessantly engaged in the management and superintendence. When the plan began to act, it was not requisite for him to attend so constantly to the business. Afterwards I had the entire management under the direction of the vestry.

*The relapse of the
parish into pauperism
only prevented by
constant vigilance
and exertion.*

If you were to die, and his Lordship were to leave the parish, or take no concern in the management, and the rate-payers were to elect, as they usually do, some decayed tradesman or worthy person, with a large family, and no especial qualifications, would the whole, do you think, run back into the old system?—I have no doubt of it, and that, too, very quickly. The orders must be most strictly attended to, or the slightest relaxation is sure to let in a flood of pauperism. I have been unwell for a fortnight or so, and I have been obliged to appoint a man to superintend in my absence, but it is an extremely difficult thing to get one on whom you may rely, and especially one who is brought up in the parish; you can get them to attend for a minute before your face, but when your back is turned you are never sure that what you direct would be done. I was obliged to discharge both the men that I got to superintend during my absence, and I was obliged to take one of them again, because I found I could get no other that was better. I suppose that I was selected on account of my military habits, and because no one could be got within the parish to attend to it.

When you have returned to your post, after your recovery from your illness, how have you usually found that the business has been conducted?—I have found that in a few days things have fallen off. The work has been indifferently done; no attention has been paid to it.

Have you been consulted by persons from other parishes?—Yes, from several.

Have they in any of the adjacent parishes?—Yes, in some they have. In Welwyn, Hartingfordbury, Watton, Essendon, Bayford, Sandrich, and one or two others.

To what extent have they carried the system into effect?—In Welwyn and Watton I believe that they have succeeded very well.

Why have the others not succeeded so very well?—My opinion is, that either the persons have not been so well supported, or else they have not been competent.

*Witness would sooner
have gone to break
stones than have
undertaken the task
of dispensing the
parish money, had he
known what was to
be encountered.*

Then is it your opinion, that to effect such a change of system it is requisite to have not only a person of especial qualifications, as workhouse-keeper, or permanent overseer, or chief executive officer, but that it is also requisite that he should receive able and continued support from influential persons?—Decidedly so. I would defy any one to do anything without it. I have seen years of foreign service, and many difficulties in the army, but if

I had

I had known what we should have had to encounter in changing the system, I would sooner have gone to break stones myself on the road than have done it.

The Rev. F. J. Faithfull, Justice of the Peace; Examined.

THE saving or gain in money by the change of parochial management in your parish, during eight years, appears to have been upwards of 14,000 l.; do you consider that, in addition to this gain in money, there has been any gain in the improved moral habits of those subject to the operation of the Poor Laws?—I am decidedly of opinion that the moral benefits obtained are much greater, much more important, than the pecuniary savings. Though as a minister I have every day much to lament, I am sure that I should have infinitely more to lament had the old system of mal-administration continued. The most important effect of the new system is, first, in calling forth domestic sympathies and filial and paternal affections, and next, in creating provident habits (which is shown in the increase of deposits in the Savings Banks.) Under the old system, when a child was left an orphan, it became, as of right, a pensioner to the parish, and owed gratitude to no one. I constantly see children left orphans; and now, under the influence of our law, that no one shall receive a pension out of the house, relations and friends come forward and support an orphan child, whom they would, without hesitation, throw upon the parish if they could do so. They do not like the idea of seeing a relation in the workhouse, whom they would not mind having on the parish pension list, and they exert themselves to maintain the person. A child who owes its subsistence to relations, owes a moral debt of gratitude to particular individuals, and is under moral securities for good character; but there is little gratitude to an abstract entity, the parish. What is singular is, that we have scarcely any persons come to the workhouse now who are not persons of bad character.

Have the personal habits of your parishioners improved since the new system of parochial management has been introduced?—There has certainly been a very general improvement, and the advance was very considerable, until that most mischievous measure of licensing beer-shops came into operation.

Have the wages of the independent labourers been improved since the change of system of administration of the Poor Laws?—Decidedly so; and the wages are higher here than in any parish in the neighbourhood where a similar system has not been adopted.

I EXAMINED Mr. Hall, a carpenter, who is a considerable holder of cottage tenements, and was named to me (by the Rev. Mr. Faithfull) as a person well acquainted with the condition of the labouring classes. Mr. Hall had, during thirty years past, taken a very active part in the management of the parish, and on some occasions had been strongly in opposition to the Marquis of Salisbury. He stated, however, that the parish was entirely indebted for the change to the talents and personal energy applied to the work by the Noble Marquis, and to the peculiar personal qualifications of the person appointed by him to serve the office of permanent overseer. This he was sure would never have been done had the matter been left in the hands of the rate-payers at large. Many of them openly said that a stranger ought not to be brought into the parish; that they ought to appoint a person from amongst themselves, some poor person, who wanted a comfortable home; “when,” observed Mr. Hall, the duties of the office required a person of peculiar firmness and habits of command, and were such as ninety-nine out of a hundred in the parish would be unable to execute.” Mr. Hall was apprehensive that were the present personal superintendence of the Marquis withdrawn, that, under the pressure of the increase of population, the affairs of the parish would relapse towards their former state.

I questioned Mr. Hall as to the latent motives of the farmers who had discharged their men in unusual numbers at the commencement of the change, a proceeding which was so likely to embarrass the Noble Marquis and defeat the plan; as to whether they really cared to have the system changed? whether they had not the notion that high rents would follow the introduction of low rates?

Mr. Hall stated that he believed no feeling of that kind existed in that parish.

Mrs. Hall, his wife, who was present, here said, “Let the truth be known; the gentleman sees how it really is.”

Mr. Hall said, that Mrs. Hall was a farmer's daughter, and she knew the best what were their sentiments on the subject.

Mrs. Hall then stated, in answer to the questions put to her, that the farmers in that quarter had a notion that the reduction of the rates was rather for the interests of the landlords than the farmers. She had heard them declare as much, and she well knew that this was their feeling.

Mr. Hall stated, that he believed that in no instance had the reduction of the rates been followed by any rise in the rents, although it was probable that had the rates continued as they were, or had they advanced, rents must have been reduced.

I afterwards questioned, at considerable length, Mr. Clarke, a farmer, who had taken an active part in parochial affairs. In substance his testimony was similar to that given by Mr. Hall. He (Mr. Clarke) was adverse to the allowance system; but he did not deny the prevalence amongst the farmers of such views as those so explicitly stated by Mrs. Hall. He then complained of the deplorably depressed condition of the farmers; yet when questioned as to their mode of living at present, as compared with their mode of living twenty or thirty years ago, he admitted that they now lived better: he warmly contended that they ought to live better; and he evinced a disposition to enter into an abstract disquisition on the nature of rent, and the propriety of its reduction.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

HERTS.

Effects of the change
on the moral habits
of the labourers.Notions of the
parishioners as to the
qualifications of the
person to be appointed
permanent over-
seer.Rents did not rise as
the rates were re-
duced; though rents
must have been re-
duced, had not rates
been reduced or
checked in their pro-
gress.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
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In this parish I found that the Noble Marquis had made several important improvements in the management, that had not been introduced into other parishes, where improved systems had been carried into execution.

Those who are conversant with places in which the youth are congregated together in classes, are aware that after the age of infancy properly so called, the society of the youngest classes is the most disorderly and corrupt, and almost in every respect the worst. The pernicious tendency of the aggregation of young persons of the like ages had been met by the appointment of an aged and relatively respectable pauper to sleep and maintain order in the sleeping-room appropriated to the boys; and an aged matron had been similarly appointed to maintain order in the sleeping-room of the girls. The master declared that this regulation was found extremely useful. Simple, important and obvious as it appears, I never found a similar regulation adopted in any of the workhouses which I have examined.

The system of accounts appeared to me to be on the whole the best of any which I have found in actual operation.

The internal arrangements of the workhouse appeared to me on the whole to be extremely good. The dietary I thought profuse in some points.

The Most Noble the Marquis of *Salisbury*; Examined.

Has your Lordship had any practical experience in the administration of the Poor Laws in any other parish than Hatfield?—Very little.

Would you favour us by stating what the nature and extent of that experience has been?—I have, in two parishes where I was a proprietor, objected to the system of allowances on the score of family, in aid of the wages of labour at Cranborne, in Dorsetshire, with considerable success, at Hadham, in Hertfordshire, where I have entirely failed. The effect of my interference at Cranborne was to set aside a printed scale of allowances, signed with the name of the clerk of the magistrates at Blandford. The offer of taking some of the children into the workhouse was substituted for the allowances, and after a few weeks such applications became extremely rare. If I may judge by the conduct of the labourers at the riots which took place in the succeeding year, the alteration was not unpopular with them; few of them joined the rioters, and the great majority went out to put them down. By the accounts which I have lately received from the clergyman of the parish the system of allowances has not been renewed, though in some instances the rents of the cottages continue to be paid by the parish. I believe the rate of wages is higher than in those parishes where allowances are still given, if not in money payments, by indulgence in the shape of flour at a cheap rate, and ground for the cultivation of potatoes on the fallows.

Legislative remedies
proposed.

Would your Lordship, in your capacity of magistrate, and as a member of the vestry practically conversant in the administration of the relief to the poor, favour us by stating, what legislative provisions your own experience has led you to consider applicable to remedy the prevalent evils of pauperism?—It is difficult to give a full answer to this question. The chief legislative provisions which have occurred to me as likely to amend the Poor Laws, are:—1st. A law declaring that parochial relief should in all cases but sickness and inability to work, be given only in the shape of employment paid for at its *bonâ fide* value, and never in aid of the wages of labour. The great difficulty would be to provide profitable employment. In agricultural parishes I have thought that this might be done by compelling farmers to give up a small part of their annual croppings, in proportion to their occupation for cultivation by the spade, the expense of which should be paid by the parish, leaving the option to the farmer to take the crops when they should have reached maturity, on repayment of the expenses, or to relinquish them to the parish. In manufacturing parishes some of the rough processes of manufacture might be adopted with advantage to furnish employment.—2d. An enactment compelling the distribution of relief in kind instead of money.—3d. The reduction of the heads of settlement to birth, and residence for a term of years.—4th. An alteration in the laws of bastardy placing the child in the same situation as any other pauper; and imposing on both the parents a moderate fine, or in default of payment a short imprisonment. The fine to be applied, in the first instance, to the reimbursement of the parish, in the second for the benefit of the child when of sufficient age to maintain itself. But I am confident that all attempts at improvement are fruitless, so long as magistrates and overseers are in effect not responsible for all illegal payments made to the paupers under their authority.

All attempts at
improvement fruitless
unless overseers are
responsible for
illegal payments;
their pecuniary
responsibility proposed.

By what further measures does your Lordship propose to enforce the execution of the alterations you propose?—The pecuniary responsibility of the magistrates and overseers would be a sufficient guarantee for the due execution of the laws.

Does your Lordship see any objection to the imposition of additional responsibilities on the magistrates or the overseer for the misapplication of the poor's-rates?—None whatever.

Do you consider that those responsibilities may be rendered effectual; and what description and extent of responsibilities does your Lordship conceive would prove effectual?—Yes; by

by making the amount of every illegal payment out of the rates recoverable against the magistrate or overseers who granted it by the simplest legal process. Full costs of suit to follow the verdict. Appeals in cases of settlement would be much less frequent if the costs were always imposed upon the defeated party.

In those cases where the parishes are so very small as to be unable to maintain workhouses themselves, or procure the consent of adjacent parishes, by what means does your Lordship consider that the workhouse system of management may be introduced?—If workhouses are to be adopted universally, which is a matter of doubtful policy, the machinery under which parishes may at present be incorporated might be simplified, and the decision upon all such incorporations left to the magistrates in quarter sessions.

What extent of divisions or districts does your Lordship consider would be the most convenient for Poor Law administration?—The extent of the districts could not be better defined than by the divisions adopted by the magistrates for the convenience of holding petty sessions.

In reference to the expense to which parishes are put by the present management of the militia, has your Lordship considered that any useful alterations may be made?—The present opportunity should be taken when it would not be a hardship upon any one to repeal the law making allowances to militiamen's wives and families. It should be made imperative upon parishes to find their quota of men without ballot, which would be a great saving of expense, and they should have the power to enrol single men who were fitted for the service, and were habitually dependent upon the parish for employment under certain restrictions, and for a short period.

Has your Lordship tried spade husbandry, or other similar experiments in providing labour for the poor?—I have; but the experiments have not been conducted with sufficient accuracy to enable me to give an account of their results. I have little doubt, however, that spade husbandry would answer extremely well as a parochial employment, and in a previous answer I have suggested a mode of applying it. In three parishes I have tried the allotment of small portions of land to the labourers, and I believe it the best scheme for their advantage that has ever been devised. In one parish, that of Cranborne, I have permitted large inclosures of the heath upon a lease of one life at a nominal rent, restricting the tenants from building. Some of the labourers now hold as much as seven or eight acres. There are near forty holdings, of different extent, and they are principally cultivated by the women and children, while the fathers are out at work as usual. I have no hesitation in saying that these inclosures produced the best crops in the parish the last time I was there.

HITCHIN, HERTS.

The Noble Marquis favoured me with the following Letter, descriptive of the management of the Parish of Hitchin.

YOUR Lordship having done me the honour to notice an observation I made at the meeting of the Agricultural Association at Hertford, relative to the necessity of a more judicious application of the funds raised for the support of the Poor, and also to request that I would forward to you the system pursued by us in this parish:—

We claim no merit to ourselves, nor do we consider we have introduced any thing new into our mode of management, but have rather copied from others, particularly from the evidence of Francis Pym, esq. in his examination before a Committee of the House of Lords, which most probably your Lordship has at hand; this evidence, but more particularly his appendix to it, I certainly consider worthy the close attention of all who wish well to their country.

The parish of Hitchin has of late years appointed three overseers; these overseers, leaving nearly the whole of the management to the paid assistant. Under this system, our expenses have enormously increased, so much so, that within the three years preceding the last, that increase amounted to 1,300*l*. Being a considerable occupier, I complained of this extravagant outlay, but in vain. A vestry being called for the purpose of choosing overseers for the present year, I attended, and voluntarily offered my services, which were accepted, and two other respectable individuals, Mr. Paternoster and Mr. C. Marshall, appointed to serve with me, and from whom I received every support.

Our first effort was to clear the workhouse, which, from the number of able-bodied labourers, with their families, mixed up with the aged, infirm and orphan children, rendered the workhouse a most disgraceful spectacle, the continual influx of paupers making it impossible to keep them clean. We effected this by at first enforcing very strict discipline, and afterwards by offering work out of the house upon condition of taking their families with them. We were, in many instances obliged to give them an outfit, as, upon entering the house, they had disposed of their all. In a short time, about eight or nine weeks, we had reduced the number, which was at one time in the preceding year upwards of 100, to 30, all either aged or infirm, with the exception of a few children. There is one thing more of great importance in workhouse management, that of paying ready money for every article used in the house, or connected with it, and to strike a weekly balance; this I had great difficulty in enforcing, as assistant overseers and governors of workhouses prefer outstanding bills with tradesmen, but I at last accomplished it, and to this, my Lord, I consider in a great measure we are indebted to the great reduction in our expenses, the late overseers being, at the expiration of their year, totally ignorant as to the state of their funds; so much were they deceived, that after holding

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.DISTAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

HERTS.

out to the parishioners the expectation of a surplus of 300 *l.*, they were, on making up their accounts, obliged to borrow that sum upon interest, to pay off their bills at Lady-day.

Our next step was to find employment for the poor, and this was not done without great difficulty, the rate payers in the township not coming forward to assist us; for some time I employed them wholly on my own farms in digging, the parish paying one moiety. The digging is performed by the common garden fork, at 1½ *d.* per pole, or at 20 *s.* per acre. This gives the farmer his tillage as reasonable as by the plough; and Hitchin, being a mixed and populous parish, the rate-payers in the town by this means contribute in part to the support of the surplus labourer. After some time the principal inhabitants, seeing our plan work well, and also the state of the poor improving, and at the same time the town, which, under the former system was in a continual state of disturbance and riot, arising chiefly from the non-employment of the poor, and finding also the great expenses attending prosecutions, and continual attendance upon magistrates entirely done away with, the proprietors and occupiers consented to give up, for the purpose of digging by surplus labourers, two acres in every hundred of their occupation; and I am happy to inform your Lordship, that at present, owing to strict attention to them by a proper superintendant, and by keeping the men to the same hours as other farming labourers, our expenses under this head have not, upon an average, exceeded 50 *s.* per week, giving employment to all.

The next thing that attracted our attention was the bastardy cases, which were numerous, the payments amounting yearly to 140 *l.*, the receipts being not more than one-fifth of that sum. We were not at first aware of the powers we possessed; as, persons, therefore, continued to pay for some time as usual, but upon obtaining further information, we gave notice to the females that we should, on the following week, discontinue the payments; and to our great astonishment we met with little opposition; on our last day of paying the poor we had not a single application under the head of bastardy, nor has there at present been more than two complaints to the magistrates, both of which have been dismissed, and we have heard no more of them.

We have made no alteration in the relief to the necessitous and deserving poor, the inmates in the workhouse being, as I have before described, aged and infirm, with a few children, are quite satisfied with the attention and allowance they receive.

I have not the least doubt, as I took the liberty of observing to your Lordship when at Hertford, that every expectation might be realized if parishes were more unanimous. The great and alarming evils which prevail, owing to the mal-administration of the Poor Laws, have chiefly arisen from this, and leaving the management to mercenaries. They are evils, my Lord, that will, if not in time corrected, swallow up the whole landed property in this country; already in some districts do we see and hear of their baneful effects. We have, my Lord, had one of the finest harvests, as to weather, perhaps ever remembered, and Providence, except in a few instances, has not been unsparing of its bounties, and yet what do we already hear,—“Complaining in our streets,”—“The poor crying for bread.” This, my Lord, in a country as peculiarly blessed as ours, ought not to be.—I trust, my Lord, you, with others whom Providence has so highly favoured, will, by your influence and example, endeavour to rescue the industrious farmer from the otherwise inevitable ruin which seems now to await him. From the legislature he has little to expect; the manufacturing and trading interests exerting every nerve further to depress him.

Believe me to be, with the highest respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

Higlover, October 4th, 1833.

Tho^s Hailey.

WELWYN (HERTS).

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	1,015	1,130	1,287	1,369

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	£. 491	£. 775	£. 973	£. 1,119	£. 1,103	£. 730

I VISITED the adjacent parish of *Welwyn*, where the system of management, introduced by the Marquis of Salisbury into Hatfield, had been copied. At *Welwyn* the system had been changed, chiefly at the instance of Mr. Bent, a considerable landed proprietor. When I visited the parish, I was not so fortunate as to meet with any of the gentlemen who could have given me the best information with relation to the effects which the change had produced. I inspected the workhouse, where I found the matron, or wife of the master of the house, who had been a drill-serjeant, and from her I obtained very full information as to the details of the management of the workhouse. She stated, that her husband's appointment to the situation had excited very great displeasure, because it was considered that none but a parishioner ought to have been appointed. The change was objected to by the farmers, on the ground that it would do no good, and would incur a very considerable expense. It was most strongly objected to by the smaller shopkeepers, who had been in the habit of supplying the workhouse with goods. Had her husband known what they would have had to encounter, she was confident that he would never have accepted the situation.

Appointment against
the parishioners.

Change objected to
by farmers.

situation. By making purchases of goods of others than the shopkeepers of the parish, they had saved 2*d.* in the pound in the supply of bacon; 2½*d.* and 3*d.* per pound in the supply of butter; 1½*d.* per pound in the supply of sugar; and about 1*s.* per pound in the teas; and the several articles were worse in the bargain.

There were now 30 paupers in the house, of whom 12 were children, 12 old men and 6 children: the cost of maintenance was now from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 4*d.*; it had been about 4*s.*

The chief results of the change were, that the men worked steadier; that wages had been somewhat improved, and that marriages were less improvident.

I had not an opportunity of revisiting this parish to obtain the testimony of other persons, and at my request the Central Board issued the following circular letter of the Queries to be forwarded to the officiating minister of this parish, and also to the minister of each of the other parishes in which, as I was informed, attempts had been made to introduce the system of Poor Law administration established at Hatfield.

“ Poor Law Commission Office, Whitehall,
10th October 1833.

“ Sir,

“ INFORMATION having been received by His Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the practical operation of the Poor Laws, that a change has been made in the administration of the Poor Laws in your parish, and a system adopted similar to that introduced by the Marquis of Salisbury at Bishop's-Hatfield, I am directed to request that you will state in detail—

1. What have been the nature and extent of the change of system?
2. What have been its effects?
3. The date of the change?
4. The circumstances of the parish which induced it?
5. The persons at whose instance chiefly it was made, naming them: whether proprietors, and large or small holders of land?
6. Whether any of the proposed alterations were opposed successfully, or not? and by what class of persons? and whether those persons were interested in maintaining the former rate of expenditure? For instance, if the food of the poor is now supplied by open contract, whether that mode of supply was directly or indirectly opposed by the tradesmen who had been accustomed to supply it?
7. Whether there were any and what difficulties experienced in effecting the change, specifying them?
8. Whether a permanent overseer has been appointed? whether he is a parishioner, and what are his peculiar qualifications? whether his appointment was opposed? by what class of persons, and on what grounds?
9. What have been the chief results of the alterations, so far as they have been carried into effect? Have the labourers become more steady workmen? do they keep their places better? have their wages been reduced or improved, or do they remain stationary?
10. What number of able-bodied labourers, or their families, was formerly chargeable to the parish? what number is now chargeable? what has become of those labourers who may have ceased to be chargeable?
11. If you have ceased to make any distinction between the married and single, what has been the effect, so far as you can judge, upon improvident marriages; are they less frequent? Are there fewer or more cases of bastardy than formerly? Have any classes become more provident? Have resources been made apparent, that under the previous administration of the law were not conceived to exist?
12. State generally the moral effects of the change, so far as they may have been apparent, and what has been the pecuniary saving to the parish?

“ If there be any person in your parish, whom you consider more competent, from greater experience or otherwise, to answer all or any of the above Queries, have the kindness to show them to him, and request him to forward replies at his earliest convenience.

“ I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

“ John Revans, Secretary.”

The following are the Answers from Welwyn:—

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ Welwyn, Oct. 26th, 1833.

“ IN answering the letter which I had the honour to receive, it is necessary to state that I was not the officiating minister at the time of the alteration, but only from June 1831. I am therefore unable to answer on my own knowledge many of the questions. I have however consulted those who are better informed on those points, and shall endeavour to answer the questions in the same order as in the letter.

“ Answer to Question 1.—The affairs of the parish were formerly managed by an open vestry, at the church. The change is from that system to the provisions of Gilbert's Act.

“ 2.—On the whole system, allowances were made and rents paid; the former have been discontinued, except in the case of some old pensioners; the latter altogether.

“ 3.—The house was opened June 28, 1830. The governor's appointment dated May 1, 1830.

“ 4.—The circumstances inducing the change were—rapidly increasing rates, exorbitant demands on the part of the idle poor, and visible improvidence. To this may be added, the inadequacy of the poor-house.—(Paper I.)

“ 5.—The persons at whose instance it was made, were Mr. Blake, an active magistrate, and the largest landed proprietor, supported by the rector and other landed proprietors.—(See Paper I.)

P. L. (A.)—III.

L

“ 6.—There

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

HERTS.

Objected to by small
shopkeepers who supplied the workhouse
with goods.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

DISPAUPERIZED
PARISHES.

A Serjeant of the
Guards appointed
permanent overseer.

" 6.—There was no direct opposition, nor any opposition at all till the system had commenced working. Then it was indirect, from some of the tradespeople, who wished to have a monopoly in serving the poor-house, and from some others who had formerly the management. The poor-house supplied by open contract.

" 7.—The difficulties experienced were trifling. Insubordination on the part of the paupers, both in and out of the house, the latter encouraged, it is supposed, in some cases, by the petty rate-payers.

" I have enclosed the standing Rules for the guidance of the Parochial Committee.—(See Paper II.)

" 8.—A permanent overseer has been appointed, who is also the governor of the poor-house; he was sergeant in the Coldstream Guards, a married man, and not a parishioner. It is to the efficiency of himself and his wife that the success of the undertaking thus far must in a great measure be attributed. His chief qualifications are firmness, order, clearness and accuracy in his accounts, unconquerable resolution and integrity. On the part of his wife, extraordinary cleanliness, and a sincere desire to better the condition of those (especially the young) under her care. The appointment was not opposed, though they have both had much to contend with.

" 9.—The results of the alteration—reduction of rate—(See No. 12.) Labourers less disposed to throw themselves out of work; not applying to the parish on every emergency; there are few new paupers. Some of those who had been on the parish as permanently sick for years have partially recovered, and have returned to work, supporting, or at least helping to support themselves and their families. Several of the girls who came into the house when it was first opened have obtained respectable places, and have turned out well; but for the discipline and habits of the poor-house, they would in all probability have been ruined.

" I have enclosed a paper showing the monthly number in the house throughout. The wages have been higher than in 1830, but they talk of reduction, which will bring them down to the same point.

The greater proportion of the able-bodied labourers absorbed.

" 10.—There were at the commencement of the system 32 able-bodied labourers chargeable, but still relieved for the most part by labour; there are now only six. Of the remainder, some few have been taken into the house, the others have provided for themselves or have been provided for by their friends.

" 11.—The only distinction now made between the married and single is this, that the single are invariably taken into the poor-house on application for relief; the married people and the aged sometimes provided with work out of it, chiefly task work, gravel digging for the road, &c. I am not aware of any sensible difference in the number of improvident marriages, nor of fewer cases of bastardy. But as we have adopted the same system for the latter as at Bingham, Notts, we hope, as at that place, to see some improvement in future. It is difficult for me to give a decided opinion as to the increased providence of any class, not having been in the parish at the beginning of the system; but from report I should judge that there is some improvement in the lowest. The fresh resources are not very apparent, yet some must have been discovered, to enable the poor to live, as far as we can judge, as well as formerly. I must even confess my astonishment at their being, in many cases, not only able to live, but to put by a trifle weekly for winter clothing.

Effects in this parish neutralized by the prevalence of bad systems in surrounding parishes.

" 12.—Moral effects cannot well be so apparent as to justify a decided opinion; neither is it to be hoped that they will be very great where the system is confined to one parish, surrounded by others where the Poor Laws are differently or more faultily administered. The good which might result is thus hindered by the feelings of irritation, arising from the denial of those indulgencies which are afforded to their neighbours. Still there are symptoms of a more independent spirit, and of improvement in some of the worst characters. The expenditure, in 1830, was £. 1,413 1 11

in 1831	-	-	1,403	11	3
in 1832	-	-	1,102	4	8
in 1833	-	-	1,015	-	2

" I have the honour to be, my Lords and Gentlemen,

" Your obedient humble servant,

" Ralph Clutton,
Curate of Welwyn:

I.—" SUBSCRIPTION for the paying off part of the Debt incurred for the building the POOR-HOUSE,
Welwyn, Herts.

" THE number of paupers applying for relief having much increased of late years, and the building hitherto used as a poor-house having been found small and inconvenient, it has been thought advisable to build a new Poor-house, and a sum of money has been borrowed for that purpose under Act 22 Geo. 3.

" A plain but substantial building, capable of accommodating from 80 to 100 poor, has in consequence been erected, at an expense of 1,650*l.* including all outbuildings, furniture and utensils complete. The house has been opened for the reception of the poor since the month of June last (1830), and it is expected that by the system which this building will enable the parish officers to adopt, a more comfortable asylum will be provided for the aged and infirm, while the idle pauper, capable of work, will be prevented from resorting to the poor's rate for relief. By these means two essential objects will be attained; the poor's rate will be eventually diminished, and the moral condition of the poor much improved. The Act requires that one-twentieth of the sum borrowed should be paid off annually, which, together with the interest on the whole debt, must be defrayed out of the annual poor's rate. This, in the first instance, will create a burthen falling entirely on the tenants and occupiers of land, who have but a temporary interest in their respective farms. They have, however, much to their credit, readily come forward to promote so useful an undertaking, and it is hoped that the proprietors of lands and houses in the parish will be disposed to assist the tenantry by bearing a portion of the expenses incurred, considering that their property will derive a permanent benefit from the improvement.

" Under

"Under these circumstances the proprietors of lands and houses in the parish of Welwyn have contributed as follows:

	£.	s.	d.
S. Johnes Knight (Rector) - - - - -	25	-	-
William Blake, Esq. - - - - -	100	-	-
Lord Dacre - - - - -	25	-	-
Dowager Lady Shee - - - - -	20	-	-
Earl Cowper - - - - -	50	-	-
Viscount Melbourne - - - - -	25	-	-
William Wilshue, Esq. - - - - -	25	-	-
Archdeacon Watson - - - - -	10	-	-

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II.—"STANDING RULES for the Direction of the COMMITTEE meeting at the POOR HOUSE in Welwyn.

" 1. No relief to be granted out of the poor-house, excepting in cases of sickness.

" 2. No relief to be given in sickness without a certificate from the parish apothecary that the party applying is really ill and requires assistance; and in all cases of sickness the relief to be given in provisions, and never in money, excepting in special cases where the party resides at a distance.

" 3. No relief to be given on account of the number of children in a family, or as an allowance to make up for deficient wages; but that in case the family cannot be maintained by the father or mother, the whole family be taken into the poor-house.

" 4. When employment is found for an able-bodied labourer, who is willing to work, but unable to find it, he shall be as much as possible employed in task or piece-work, and at wages below what are usually given, so as to make him desirous of finding work elsewhere, rather than by applying to the overseer.

" 5. When an unmarried woman is with child, or is delivered of a bastard child, she is to be taken before the magistrates in the usual way, and when the order of affiliation is made out, she is to be told that she must get the allowance herself from the father, and that the parish will make no allowance, and that if the child becomes chargeable to the parish, she will be sent to the House of Correction for not less than six weeks, and she is invariably to be so sent, by commitment of two justices, on the expiration of one calendar month after she shall have been delivered.

Treatment of cases
of Bastardy.

" 6. No allowances to be made to enable persons to pay their rents.

" 7. All pensions and all allowances to bastards which shall have been heretofore granted, to be examined from time to time, in order to see what reductions can be made therein.

" N. B.—Both these Papers were drawn up by Mr. Blake."

WATTON (HERTS).

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	602	644	812	830

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the Relief of the Poor - }	£. 440	£. 547	£. 766	£. 555	£. 586	£. 595

" Watton Rectory, near Ware,
October 31, 1833.

" Sir,

" Your letter would have received earlier attention, but having myself only been appointed Incumbent of the parish since our local alterations were made, I could not reply to it without consulting those friends who knew its actual condition.

" The paper has been put into the hands of a very intelligent parishioner, and I have the pleasure now to forward to you his Answers to the various Queries, which will, I doubt not, meet the wishes of the Commissioners.

" I am faithfully yours,

" John Revans, Esq."

" E. Bickersteth."

" Sir,

" Watton, Herts, October 31, 1833.

" In reply to your Queries, transmitted to this place, relative to the change which has taken place in the administration of the Poor Laws, we subjoin the following Answers, each as numbered, being in reply to the corresponding number of the Query transmitted.

" We may further briefly remark, that the changes introduced have not gone to the full extent of the system established by the Marquis of Salisbury at Hatfield, a small parish not appearing to require all the formula and arrangement which a large one must necessarily adopt.

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"To show the extent of the change, it may also be briefly observed, that the former management of the parish affairs was in the usual way committed to overseers *annually* appointed, who received and disbursed the funds of the parish.

"We are, Sir, your most obedient servants,

"Fred^h Newman, Overseer.

"George Squire, Churchwarden."

"To John Revans, Esq.,

"Secretary to the Commissioners on the Poor Laws."

"REPLIES to the QUERIES of the POOR LAW COMMISSIONERS to the Parish of *Watton*.
(For a Copy of the QUERIES see p. 73.)

"Answer to Query N^o. 1.—The nature and extent of the change of system may be stated to have been chiefly in the erection of a workhouse for the better superintendence and maintenance of the necessitous and impotent poor, the establishment of a permanent overseer, and a more scrupulous attention and closer investigation into the wants and necessities of claimants for relief, with a *rule* to find work for all able-bodied labourers out of employ, and to afford no relief to such persons without work; also to afford no relief *permanently* out of the workhouse to new claimants from superannuation or other cause.

"2.—The effects may be stated in the result, viz. the amount of expenditure in the three years preceding the above alteration, and in the three years subsequent thereto, which has been as follows:—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
"In the year ending Lady-day 1828 - - - -	723	13	2			
Ditto - - ditto - - 1829 - - - -	772	6	7			
Ditto - - ditto - - 1830 - - - -	875	-	6			
Average - - - -				790	6	9
"In the first year subsequent to the change ending Lady-day 1831 - - - -	643	12	8			
In the second ditto - - ditto - - Lady-day 1832 -	580	14	10			
In the third ditto - - ditto - - Lady-day 1833 -	621	6	3			
				615	4	7
Making the average yearly saving of - - - -			£.	175	2	2

"It might also be stated, that the comforts of the poor within the workhouse are infinitely greater than at the former period. Considerable reluctance, in some cases, has been manifested to become inmates of the workhouse, but they have mostly been found to be perfectly satisfied and comfortable after a short residence.

"3.—The change of systems was begun at Lady-day 1830.

"4.—The circumstances inducing the change were principally, in the first place, the successful and evidently beneficial system pursued by the Marquis of Salisbury at Hatfield; and in the next, a sense of looseness and imperfection of the common mode of management of the parish affairs.

Change affected by
Proprietors.

"5.—The change was effected chiefly at the instance and suggestion of Mr. A. Smith and Mr. Samuel Smith, the proprietors of Woodhall and other estates in the parish and neighbourhood.

Prejudice against
it on the part of the
poor and the
smaller traders.

"6.—The change was not much opposed in the first instance; but some opposition has been since maintained, though not with the least effect, by two or three individuals, partly, it may seem, from interested motives, and much from perverseness of disposition. A good deal of prejudice among the poor and some of the small tradesmen seems also to exist against it. The food was in the first instance supplied by open contract; but as the competition was so very limited, or could scarcely be said to exist, it has been for the most part abandoned, and the cheapest market sought. Those supplies in both cases have been obtained partly from tradesmen in the place and partly from Hertford. Some opposition has been manifested by one tradesman, who conceived himself aggrieved.

"7.—No particular difficulties of any kind were experienced in effecting the change.

Permanent Over-
seer appointed who
had been in the
Army.

"8.—A permanent overseer, as before stated, has been appointed, who is also governor of the workhouse, but is not a parishioner; having been in the army, his qualifications for the discipline and management of the workhouse, by the aid of that order, regularity and system in which he had been there initiated, together with a perfect ability as to the arrangement and keeping of the accounts, constitute the answer to this Query. Some little dissatisfaction, but no opposition, was manifested to this appointment: the principal objections were, his being a stranger, and not a parishioner.

"9.—The benefits resulting from the change appear for the most part to be centered in the better and more just distribution of the funds, the finding employment for labourers out of work, or who seek parish assistance. As to any amendment in the general habits and demeanour of the labourers themselves, we are not prepared to say that we observe any material difference. There are, perhaps, less numerous and unmerited applications for relief than formerly, knowing it will not be granted unnecessarily and without strict inquiry. Thus they have to rely more on their own resources than on the wages of idleness and pauperism; and so far, at least, an improvement may be considered to have been effected. The wages of the labourer have now for a length of time been stationary.

"10.—The number of labourers chargeable on the parish has varied so much in each of the above periods, and is so much dependent on the seasons, that no precise answer can well be given to this question. None have been removed from this parish by emigration; they seek employ where there is any likely to be had.

"11.—The distinction (in wages) between the married and the single has not, perhaps, at any time been so great in this parish as in many others; but that such distinction has been entirely removed we do not mean to state, nor can we see clearly how it could be effected. It will admit of being questioned which is the *real market-price* of labour, viz. the 6s. or 8s. per week paid to the single man, or the

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10s. or 12s. paid to the married one; and also whether the latter wages are not more induced from the operation of the Poor Laws than by the marketable demand for labour. It is evident that with less wages the married man with a family must apply for parish assistance, and as his necessities must be met, and there seems a tacit admission that his requisite funds are best supplied to him in wages, this mode is generally acted upon. If those wages depended on the marketable demand and price of labour done, uninfluenced by any other causes or considerations, it is questionable whether the married man's wages would not descend to the level with the single man's of 6s. or 8s. per week, or whether the two might not merge together into one general price of 8s. or 9s. per week, instead of the single man's rising to the higher level, which does not seem probable if left solely to be regulated by the natural cause of supply and demand.

"There can be no doubt that all such distinctions are pernicious, and that the single man's labour is as valuable as the married man's. That it is not made so in practice must be owing to some influential cause operating either in favour of the one or against the other, can scarcely admit of doubt. To discover such cause and supply the remedy, might be alike desirable and beneficial. The distinction between the married and single labourers not being entirely removed in this parish, any answer to the other interrogatories may not wholly apply. But speaking generally, it may be observed, that improvident marriages have been rare, and cases of bastardy of seldom occurrence. As to whether any classes have become more provident, it may be stated that two benefit clubs and a bank for savings have for some time been established in the place, which have not been without their beneficial effects. No additional resources have been made apparent, at least none which are decidedly obvious; nevertheless, on the whole, we think that some improvement, as regards the state of the poor themselves, may be safely stated as a general result, and we flatter ourselves that such improvement is in progress.

"12.—The Answer to this Query may in a great measure be found in the foregoing. That any decided moral improvement has been effected, we do not venture to state. Habits and feelings do not seem to admit of instantaneous or speedy change, and we look more to the future for greater beneficial results. It should be stated, that several beer-houses have been opened in the parish, and have had a materially prejudicial effect on the moral improvement of the people."

HERTINGFORDBURY, HERTS.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	625	653	827	753

		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the Relief of the Poor - }	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
	317	522	713	510	439	588	

"GENTLEMEN,

"The information received by His Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the practical operation of the Poor Laws, of a change in the system of administration in the parish of Hertingfordbury, is to a certain degree correct; but the amended system is not altogether similar to that introduced by the Marquis of Salisbury at Bishop's Hatfield. Previous to the year 1830, the paupers in the workhouse at Hertingfordbury were farmed by an individual, at the rate of 4s. per head per week; the parish clothing the paupers when admitted; the master of the workhouse undertaking to keep them clothed and fed, receiving at the same time the amount of their earnings, and charging for children of three weeks old at the same rate as for grown-up persons. It was the custom also to give pensions of 2s. per week to all widows without family; and rather than send applicants for relief to the workhouse, at a charge of 4s. per week, it was deemed expedient to allow a smaller sum, by way of a temporary allowance. It need not be pointed out how anxiously applicants for relief sought to be placed on the pension list, and how much this system was exposed to the abuses of favouritism.*

"The change of system has been to give a yearly stipend to the master of the workhouse, to keep the paupers upon a regular diet, to put all to work that are capable of work, and for the parish to receive the proceeds of that work, to put no new widows upon the pension list, but if unable to keep themselves, or to be kept by their children, to take them into the house; to attach a large garden to the house for the inmates when capable of labour to work in, and to keep the doors under lock and key.

"The effects of this system are, that exertions are made for a livelihood, which the system of pensions deadened; that there is a strong disinclination to enter the poor-house; the poor are kept at 3s. per head instead of 4s. and that the expenditure of the poor-rate is considerably lessened.

"The circumstances which induced this change were a want of system in the old plan, and an increasing expenditure.

"The date of the change was Lady-day 1830.

"The change was effected at the instance of myself, the rector of the parish.

"The alterations were opposed in some degree successfully, and Lord Salisbury's plan in consequence could not be fully acted upon. The existing pensions were allowed to remain, and the permanent overseer was rendered so uncomfortable in his office that another was appointed in his place, to act merely

Improvement opposed with partial success.

* See QUERIES, p. 73.

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as vestry clerk and governor of the workhouse. The persons opposing the plan were father and son, two of the largest occupiers of land in the parish, and they may be said to have been so far interested in their opposition, inasmuch as the son was in the receipt of 20*l.* a year as permanent overseer and vestry clerk.

"The parish being a small one, food is not supplied by open contract, because the consumption would not call forth active competitors; but the prices of provisions are constantly compared with the prices of Hatfield and Welwyn workhouses, where the competition is great, and regulated accordingly.

"There are so few tradesmen in the parish that the change received no opposition from them.

"The difficulties consist in the poor being set against the change by the aforementioned occupiers of land, and in their endeavours to increase the expenditure as much as possible by throwing every impediment in the way of the permanent overseer, in their hiring yearly servants from other parishes, giving them settlements, and thus increasing the number of able-bodied men, and raising general dissatisfaction.

"A permanent overseer was appointed, who was also to collect the rates in the adjoining parishes of Bayford and Little Berkhamstead, and to keep the accounts, and superintend the men employed at parish work. He had been a pay-serjeant in the Guards; his appointment was opposed chiefly on the ground of his being a stranger.

"A diminution of the rates has been the chief result; wages have remained stationary; it is difficult to say whether the labourers are more steady, but I think that they keep their places better.

"It is difficult to say what were the number of able-bodied labourers formerly chargeable, and what number are now chargeable, because, except in dead times, of but few weeks' continuance, the landowners have employed all the labourers of good character, and who were good workmen.

"The farmers generally make this distinction between the single and married men: the single are put to day-work, the married to piece-work. If single men are put to piece-work, no distinction is made. As far as regards the parish, we have had no single men of good character upon it. The disorderly men, who are constantly burthensome, do not receive the wages of married men; they are frequently placed in the workhouse, and made to labour for their food and lodging, without a money payment. We have found this to be the only means of making them provide for themselves; at the same time we are very careful to secure work amongst the landowners for those single men who conduct themselves well.

"It is too early to form an opinion as to whether bastardy cases increase or decrease. Marriages are regulated more by cottage room than by any administration of the Poor Laws. I cannot answer the latter part of Question 11.

"If the change could have been carried rigorously into full operation, I have no doubt but that a very good moral effect would have been produced; all that I can say now is, that at Lady-day 1830, the expenditure amounted to 713*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.*, and at Lady-day 1833, to 556*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*

"Gentlemen,

"I remain your very obedient Servant,

"Rob. Eden.

"Hertingfordbury, October 16th, 1833.

Unwillingness of
tenants at will to
contribute towards
the formation of a
workhouse.

"From the perusal of the above Answers, the Commissioners will have seen the difficulty of putting into operation Lord Salisbury's system, in a small parish where the occupiers are not united in keeping down the expenditure. These difficulties are increased from the impossibility of a small parish being able to pay for the services of an efficient permanent overseer, and to establish a well-regulated workhouse. In the year 1827 I endeavoured to unite, under Sturges Bourne's Act, the parishes of Hertingfordbury, Essendon, Little Berkhamstead and Bayford. Could I have succeeded, we should have built a central workhouse, and have had under superintendence a population of 2,000 persons, and have been able to pay a really efficient officer. My plan failed, partly from the lukewarmness of the landowners, from the unwillingness of the occupiers (being tenants at will) to contribute to the formation of a new building, and from the opposition of the tradesmen of the various parishes, who were employed occasionally in the old repairs of the old workhouses, but had no chance of getting the tender for building the new. Should the plan have been carried into effect, 'the workhouse would have been a receptacle for the aged, the sick, the infirm and for children; it would also have acted *in terrorem* for the idle and profligate;' subjected them to a system of secluded restraint and salutary discipline, which, together with a simple but sufficient diet, would have proved so repugnant to dissolute habits, that they would soon have devised means of self-support."

ESSENDON, HERTS.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	545	566	595	672

Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
	£. 355	£. 399	£. 423	£. 336	£. 265	£. 234

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*Answer to Query No. 1.**—"The placing our workhouse under strict rule and doing away with all pensioners. Under our old system the parish had a workhouse, but from want of discipline it was of little use. Most of the rooms were occupied by families, for the most part not employed by the parish, and boarding themselves. At the same time the parish was paying a large sum to *out-pensioners*, and before it could be relieved from this burthen, it was necessary to clear the house of the families then in it. This was our only difficulty; but at last two gentlemen (Sir Culling Eardley Smith and Mr. Currie) engaged to find cottages for them; and the parish immediately refused all further relief to out-pensioners, and the workhouse, repaired and put under strict regulations was opened for the reception of those who chose to come home.

"2.—Scarcely any of those who were out-pensioners have come home to the workhouse.

"3.—About Lady-day, 1830.

"4.—The bad system of the old plan and the burthen of pensioners. *Vide Answer 1.*

"5.—It was the general wish of the parishioners.

"6.—No.

"7.—No difficulties arose, except that of finding cottages, as stated in Answer No. 1.

"8.—An overseer is appointed *yearly*, who has a *permanent assistant*; the assistant lives in the workhouse, and likewise has the management of the roads, and any parish labour there may be.

"9.—But little pecuniary saving to the parish, but certainly increased comfort to the paupers in the house. The alteration cannot however be said to have in any way affected the situation of the labourer. They are neither more steady, nor do they keep their places better.

"10.—Previous to 1830 many able-bodied labourers and their families were chargeable to the parish, not being able to get work for themselves. But upon adopting the new system, Sir Culling E. Smith was appointed overseer, which office he served till last March (1833). During these years he employed most of the labourers who were out of work, and who would have applied to the parish, *on his own farm*, which of course was a great relief and a temporary saving to the parish; but another overseer is now appointed, and there is not the same employment found for the labourers who are out of work, and consequently the demand for parish labour is much increased, and there is every reason to fear will continue to increase throughout the winter. Last winter the parish hired a field, which they dug twice and planted with potatoes, but owing to the dry season, and perhaps some mismanagement, the crop has turned out so bad that the produce will little more than clear the rent, and the labour of course will be lost.

"11.—But little distinction is made between the married and single; improvident marriages about the same; bastardy not increased. The overseer, owing to the smallness of the parish, is much crippled in his exertions, and unable to exercise many resources and advantages which a well-regulated workhouse ought to give, and which would tend much to the benefit of the parish and the comfort of the poor.

"12.—Unfortunately, the change of system has effected but little moral good; nor can any be expected whilst the present beer-house system exists. The young men are no longer boarded in the farm-houses, or under the master's eye after a certain hour; the consequence is, their evenings, as well as their weekly wages, are for the most part spent in these places.

"The pecuniary saving to the parish has been very trifling.

"*Robt Orme, Rector of Essendon, Herts.*"

"The sum required during the last year for expenses not for the relief of the poor, including county levy, churchwarden, vestry clerk, constable, registration, &c. was 90*l.* 11*s.* 9*d.* It will therefore be understood that a large proportion of the rates, raised in each year, is not applicable to the relief of the poor.

"During the first period, half the poor-house was inhabited by families living rent free, under no parochial control, each family crowded into one room, which they used for every purpose. The poor-house, which has been put into complete repair at the expense of the parish, is now entirely occupied by objects of charity, classified and placed under the control of the manager. The parish furnishes all provisions, of which a strict account is kept: during the former period, the in-door poor were farmed by the manager at per head. The children in the poor-house are educated at the charity school. No person in the poor-house is allowed to be idle, and the profit on work is received by the parish, a small proportion of their earnings being allowed to the industrious. The offices of assistant overseer, vestry clerk, manager of the poor-house, (and assistant surveyor of the roads) are now filled by one person.

"During the first period, a large sum was paid to persons living on their means, in the form of pensions and rents of cottages; these were discontinued at a few months' notice. Scarcely any of the pensioners, except orphans, have found it necessary to have recourse to the poor-house.

"During the first period, every sick person might receive a sum of money nearly equal to his earnings in health. The sick are now assisted with provisions, only, on the certificate of the parish surgeon that they are really ill.

"During the first period, every able-bodied person applying for relief was either induced to 'keep off the parish' by a small sum, or set to *work* (?) on the roads. During the last winter, the parish has hired fallow land, paying the farmer for rent, and for manuring it in the spring for a crop of potatoes. Able-bodied applicants are set to dig this land by the piece, and are paid at fixed rates of bread, meat and cash. They are not forced to work on these terms; if they prefer it, they will be taken into the poor-house; but there they must equally work, and will receive no money.

"On the whole, it may be hoped that enough has been done to make paupers feel the discomfort and degradation of living upon the industry of others; and that a motive has been supplied to them to

* For QUERIES, see p. 73.

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to economise their earnings in summer, and to employ their leisure days and hours in the cultivation of gardens; by which means there is little doubt that the necessity can be avoided of having recourse to the parish during the time that a person of good character is likely to be out of work. The system, however, will not be materially or permanently improved, till the rate is levied upon the owners, in districts of consolidated parishes, and systematically administered by persons educated for the purpose, under the control of committees of the largest rate-payers, for the maintenance in the poor-house, and in no other manner, of the physically helpless poor.

" May 13, 1833.

" C. E. S."

[These initials are stated to be those of Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Bart.]

BAYFORD, HERTS.

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	235	224	307	332

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	£. 165	£. 169	£. 208	£. 305	£. 265	£. 256

" Answer to Query No. 1.*—THE establishment of a workhouse, and doing away with all pensioners.

" 2.—A great reduction in the expenditure of the parish, and much additional comfort to those paupers who come into the poor-house.

" 3.—1831.

" 4.—Although the population of the parish is only 332, the weekly pensioners amounted, on the average, to 5 *l.* The monthly expenditure of the poor-house does not exceed that sum, in consequence of two-thirds of the pensioners not coming into the house, nor have they since required parish relief.

" 5.—W. Franks, Esq. trustee to W. R. Baker, Esq., then a minor, and almost the sole proprietor of the parish, and Mr. Lewis, a large occupier of land.

" 6 & 7.—There was no opposition to the proposed alterations, all the rate-payers cheerfully co-operating in the adoption of a plan by which their rates would be so materially reduced. Nor were there any difficulties to overcome.

" 8.—A permanent overseer was appointed in 1830, who undertook also the management of two adjoining parishes, but he was very incompetent to fill the situation, and the parishes became involved in consequence. No permanent overseer has since been appointed.

" 9.—The chief result of the change of system has been the pecuniary saving to the parish, the establishment of a workhouse not having in any way affected the situation of the labourer. They are neither more steady, nor do they keep their places better.

" 10.—Those who formerly received weekly allowances were chiefly widows, who, rather than come into the workhouse, now maintain themselves. No able-bodied labourer has for a *constancy* been chargeable to the parish.

" 11.—There is not so great a distinction as formerly between the married and single; few, if any, improvident marriages then took place, nor do they now; but it is a great question, if the same system had been pursued, that of paying the single men at a rate barely sufficient to maintain them, whether many would not have been driven to marry. The overseer is, owing to the smallness of the parish, much crippled in his exertions, and unable to exercise many resources and advantages which the establishment of a workhouse ought to give, and which would tend much to the benefit of the parish and the well-being of the poor.

" 12.—The pecuniary saving to the parish is 142 *l.*, the expenditure for the year ending Lady-day 1830 being 407 *l.*, and that of the year ending Lady-day 1831 being 265 *l.*, which is the average expenditure of each subsequent year. But, unfortunately, the change of system has effected no moral good. The labourer is still as independent of his master, and the bond of union between them becoming daily weaker, and the industry of the labouring class gradually diminishing. Nor is it surprising, as long as the parish is compelled to maintain a man in idleness (nominally at work upon the road) at the same rate of wages as a man regularly at work upon the land.

" Robt Orme,

" Rector of Bayford, Herts."

* See QUERIES, p. 73.

LITTLE BERKHAMPSTEAD, HERTS.

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	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population -	314	305	439	450

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	£. 160	£. 138	£. 229	£. 316	£. 141	£. 207

"It cannot certainly be said with any truth, that a change of system has been effected here similar to that introduced by the Marquis of Salisbury at Bishop's-Hatfield, the extent, population and other circumstances connected with the two parishes being so very dissimilar, as to preclude the adoption of some of the principles which distinguish the improved administration of that place. So far however as the questions proposed to me in your letter are applicable to the change which has been effected here, I shall proceed to answer them. The following remarks are numbered, so as to correspond with the questions proposed.*

"Answer to Q. 1 to 4.—In the spring of 1829 this parish, containing a population of 450 persons, and the adjoining parish of Bayford containing 332, being equally without a poor-house, a joint one was established by a cheap alteration of two roomy and contiguous cottages; and the plan of receiving into it all aged or infirm paupers becoming chargeable, has been since followed up with advantage to the interests of both parishes. Several cases of out-allowance were at once stopped upon the alteration being offered of admission into the house. Those persons who accepted it have been maintained in greater comfort to themselves, and with a less charge to the poor-rate than they occasioned before, and a check was given to any new cases undeserving application for relief, which no other arrangement could have afforded. The supply of provisions is not farmed, but regulated by the superintendence of a monthly vestry, the accounts being kept in a manner strictly conformable to that pursued at Hatfield, and the overseers of the two parishes settling the payment in the alternate months. A labouring couple, paid only by their board and lodging, preside over the house, the man going out to work when he can meet with it. The whole expense per head, exclusive of clothing, has not for six months past exceeded 2s. 6d. weekly for each adult; and two-thirds of that sum, or 1s. 8d. weekly, for each child under 10 years of age. The number of inmates is 24, of whom eight belong to this parish, and 16 to Bayford. A stipendiary assistant overseer for these two parishes, conjointly with that of Hertingfordbury, (which also adjoins to both,) was appointed at the same time. And the superintendence of the roads was intrusted to him also. But this part of the arrangement failed entirely after a trial of two years, and has not been renewed, in consequence of the man to whom the office was assigned contracting habits of drinking, which brought his accounts into disorder, and obliged him to quit the place in discredit. Nor has it been found practicable to engage another person equally acceptable to the three parishes, and possessing at once the character and talents equal to the charge.

*Workhouse system
applied successfully
in some cases.*

"5.—The measures here detailed were introduced chiefly at the instance of Thomas Daniell, esq., an influential magistrate and a landed proprietor, (but of no great extent,) resident in this parish, and myself, and it may be proper for me to state, that this letter has been shown to Mr. Daniell, and received his sanction.

"6.—There was scarcely any opposition offered, and none of any weight or success to the proposed alteration.

"7.—No difficulty worthy of being noticed was experienced in effecting the change.

"8.—The appointment of the permanent overseer above alluded to was certainly objected to for a time, on the ground of his not being a parishioner, but on no other.

"9.—The chief results of the alteration in one system have been a reduction of the parochial expenditure, which being scarcely met before by the levy of five and a half, or six, shilling rates in the year, is now balanced by four rates of that amount on the same assessment, and is, I think, likely to become lower still, on the death or growing up of three or four individuals or families still receiving an out-allowance, in whose behalf some peculiar considerations are allowed to plead on the introduction of a new system, although they would not probably become chargeable, as new cases, under the actual operation of it. I am not aware of any perceptible effect having been produced upon the characters or habits of the labourers, so as to mark any difference in their steadiness or in their manner of keeping their places. The beer-houses are here, as elsewhere, the great and uncontrollable hindrance to any real improvement in these respects. Their operation alone goes far to defeat the best formed plans of parochial improvement, so as to render it almost impossible to estimate what the effect of them would have been, or might now become, if they were not met and thwarted by this opposing influence of evil. The beer-houses confirm the habits of excess and improvidence in the old, and nurture them in the young. They estrange the labourer from his employ, the apprentice from his master, the husband from his wife, and the father from his children. They defy all existing provisions of parochial discipline or superintendence; and it was only last week that a most intelligent solicitor in the northern part of this county, who acts as clerk to a bench of magistrates there, assured me, that the cases were very rare indeed, in which those who were brought before them at the petty sessions, charged with some offence against the Criminal Law, had not very recently left the beer-house. They encourage every species of dishonesty and bad debt; the poor man merely changing his place of resort from one house

* For the QUERIES, see p. 73.

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house to another, as quickly as his credit is exhausted at the last; nor has the benevolent expectation of the legislature in any degree been realized by supplying the labouring classes with what they unquestionably wanted—a better description of beer than they could purchase before; as I am not aware of a single instance in this or in any one of the neighbouring villages where the retail seller brews his own beer; while that with which the brewer supplies them is somewhat cheaper, though not still more genuine than the beer they procured before. In this small parish, where only one public-house existed before the year 1830, no fewer than *four* beer-houses have been established in addition to it since, and we have been recently threatened with a *fifth*. The wages of agricultural labour in this parish have varied little, if at all, for some years past, being generally 12s. weekly in summer, and 10s. in winter. Some of the employers do not even adopt this difference, but pay the higher rate all through the year. There is, happily, very little want of employment at any season of the year, the extent of the parish scarcely exceeding 1,500 acres; and there being several gentlemen's houses situate in it, whose gardens and pleasure grounds furnish a constant demand for work: at this moment there is no one out of work.

"10.—The case of an able-bodied labourer, while in health, becoming chargeable to the parish, has never occurred during my residence here, (16 years,) and I have reason to believe was equally unknown before.

"11.—No distinction is made, nor has there been within my recollection, between the wages of the married and the single labourer. Improvident marriages are of rare occurrence. On looking back to those of the lower class, (15 in number,) which have been solemnized in this church within the last 10 years, and estimating them by my own acquaintance with the parties, and my observation of the result since, there are not more than three that can be designated as improvident. I lament, however, to say, that cases of bastardy have certainly become more frequent of late years than formerly. On the 5th May this year, I made the following pencilled memorandum on the margin of my register book of baptisms:—'The fourth illegitimate child baptized this day within five months. In the six preceding years there has been no greater number.' In reply to the latter question under this number, it may, I conceive, be truly stated, that some resources of industry have been made apparent and available under the poor-house plan, which the poor had ceased to rely upon before.

"12.—The Answer to this Question may probably be considered to have been already given in substance under the other heads.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"R. G. Baker,

Rector of Little Berkhamstead."

"To John Revans, Esq."

SANDRIDGE, HERTS.

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - - -	581	649	823	810

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	£. 340	£. 667	£. 869	£. 766	£. 788	£. 837.

"SIR,

"Sandridge Vicarage, St. Alban's, 28th October 1833.

"AVAILING myself of the suggestion at the conclusion of your letter of the 10th instant, I immediately transmitted the Queries which it contained to Mr. Marten of Marshal's Wick, a gentleman to whom we are principally indebted for the alteration which has taken place in the administration of the Poor Laws in this parish; and I have now to enclose as complete an answer to your letter as the very recent introduction of the new system will admit. Mr. Marten is the principal *resident* landowner in the parish of Sandridge; and if I were to express my opinion of the plan which, at his suggestion, the vestry have unanimously adopted, I should say that it was not only calculated to reduce the expenses of the parish, but, what is of still greater importance to the nation, to improve the 'morale' of its inhabitants.

"I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

"John Revans, Esq.,

Secretary to the Poor Law Commissioners."

"W. D. Ryland."

The following is Mr. Marten's account of the alterations made in the administration of the rates of this parish.

"Our parish consists of 5,600 acres, of which about 5,300 are under cultivation. The population in 1821 was 823, in 1831 was 810, the number of agricultural *labourers'* families was in the latter year about 80.* I ascertained last year from extracts from their accounts, furnished me by many of the principal

* Families employed in Agriculture	-	-	-	-	-	-	105
Of which are Farmers	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Labourers	-	-	-	-	-	-	80

principal farmers, that the amount paid by them in labourers' wages (exclusive of what was paid to Irish labourers, which is very trifling, as they are employed only as reapers) was on an average between 23s. and 24s. per acre, producing a fund of upwards of 6,000*l.* per annum, actually spent in labour in our parish. One would naturally have supposed that this fund was ample for the support of the labouring population, and that our parish was so advantageously circumstanced, as not to have required the collection of any, or at least of a very small amount of rates; nevertheless the rates have been considerable, and materially increased in the last few years.

In the year ending March 25th, 1822, 768*l.*, of which 125*l.* county rate and stone rate.

— — — 1823, 685*l.*, of which 78*l.* paid for county-rate.

" From that time till 1829 they remained pretty stationary, but in the year ending March 1830 the amount was 916*l.*, of which 104*l.* was county rate, and in the year ending last Lady-day the amount was 1,066*l.*; county-rate, 130*l.* The late assistant overseer, and in fact sole distributor of this fund, having other avocations (parish clerk and *parish baker*, and small farmer), could not properly attend to the duties of overseer, which are of no small difficulty. The accounts have been kept without any classification, each payment being merely entered in the cash-book as it was made; it is very difficult therefore, to collect accurately the different items under their proper heads, but of the above sum of 1,066*l.*, it appears that 356*l.* was paid in weekly pensions to infirm persons and widows, 240*l.* to able-bodied men for labour and casual relief, 130*l.* for county rate. The system of roundsmen prevailed, and labourers stating they could get no work, were either employed by the parish at nominal work, or got rid of by the bribe of a few shillings till they come again. The workhouse was let to a person who contracted to take all that were sent at 4s. per head per week, and what he could make besides of their labour. The consequence was, that the vestry was continually threatened by applicants for relief, in the event of refusal, with "Then we shall all come home; there are six of us, and it will be better for the parish to allow us 3s. or 4s. a week than to have to pay 24s." Rhetoric such as this was irresistible, and frequently prevailed. The farmers, among whom are several intelligent men, being aware that *things were not going on right*, and alarmed at the apparently increasing number of men out of employ, having no particular plan of their own to suggest, very readily adopted the new system; and if any secretly felt or feel disinclined to it they abstain from showing it, and none offered any open opposition to it, except by the bye your correspondent Mr. Thrall, who disapproved of one of the regulations of the house, without which no order could be kept up; but even he is, I believe, now convinced of its necessity, though I do not know how he is affected towards the plan generally. The extent of the change has been, to take the workhouse into our own hands, to appoint as governor, who is also assistant overseer, a late pay-serjeant of the Guards, (of whom I had an excellent character from Colonel Bowater, and I must say his zeal and anxiety in the discharge of his duty fully warrant it), to confine relief as strictly as possible to the workhouse, the rules of which as to confinement, regularity, &c. are strict, and consequently unpleasant, and thus afford a test of the necessity of the case of an applicant. The pension list has been considerably reduced, and is capable perhaps of still further reduction, but we have been as careful as possible not to act with harshness towards those old people who have been taught to rely on the parish fund. The rule on which we act in cases of bastardy, is that recommended I think by Mr. Lowe at Bingham, of having the order made upon the father, and letting the mother get the money from him as she can; if she applies to the parish for relief, either to take her into the workhouse or send her to gaol. When we commenced our present plan there were but two cases of bastardy, one of which we got rid of by the above method; the other rather puzzles us; the mother having since married, we cannot take her into the house, and the child is too young to separate it from the mother. There is a similar difficulty with respect to a family of three or four children whose mother has married again and claims relief for the children, the father-in-law refusing, and I believe it is decided not compellable to maintain them.

" What the effects of this change have been it is, as I said above, almost impossible to say, from the very short time the system has been in progress, the new governor not taking charge till the 13th April, and the house not being finished for some time after; but the half-yearly settlement of accounts, which was made about a week ago, may in some degree guide us in forming a judgment of what they are likely to be. The following is a comparative Statement of the half-years, ending September 29th, 1832, and October 5th, 1833:—

	Half-Years, from March 25, ending					
	Sept. 29, 1832.			Oct. 5, 1833.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Permanent pensions, including bastards - -	171	15	-	103	7	9
Labour and roundsmen, including casual relief -	135	16	2	45	16	3
Expenses of workhouse - - - - -	78	7	6	83	7	-
Rent paid for cottages - - - - -	6	16	6	-	4	6
Bills for clothing, law expenses, &c. - - -	5	3	-	23	19	10
Salaries - - - - -	15	4	-	20	-	-
Sundries - - - - -	2	8	7	5	1	1
Rent of field and potatoes - - - - -	19	14	8	-	-	-
TOTAL expended in relief to the poor - £.	435	5	5	281	16	5
County rate - - - - -	50	-	-	70	-	-
£.	485	5	5	351	16	5

Appendix (A.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
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DISPAUPERIZED
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The farmers con-
curred in the
change.

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"As far as it goes, the above is satisfactory in a pecuniary point of view; we certainly have the winter to look forward to, which may alter in some degree the state of the case; but I feel confident that the difficulties with which we are threatened of being overwhelmed with inmates will not be found so great as imagined, and if we can find employment for them *within* the bounds (and this is the only difficulty), there will be very few but will find it for themselves *without*. I am confirmed in this by our own experience, short as it is. In the half year, quoted above, of last year, viz. from March 25 to September 29, 1832, there were up to the end of July from 16 to 22 able-bodied men constantly receiving parish wages, 7s., 8s. and 9s. per week, declaring they could not possibly find work elsewhere. In this corresponding half year, since our new plan has operated, we have had scarcely one. In the first fortnight 11 l. was paid in labour for breaking stones by the cubic yard; in the second fortnight it was reduced to 6 l.; and the week following to 11s. 8d., when the charge totally disappeared. Of these labourers I know that several of them are at regular work, and suppose they all are; at all events they cease to apply for relief. I am very sanguine, therefore, that if the plan be steadily persevered in, the result will be not only a great pecuniary saving, but the much more important advantage of a great improvement in the moral condition of the people. That this improvement may be effectual, it is to be hoped that our neighbouring parishes may be induced to amend their ways. One or two have, I believe, been inclined to adopt a labour-rate; but, in my limited judgment, I must congratulate them on being deprived of the power of putting in practice the means of ensuring support to idleness, and confounding the character of the profligate and industrious."

BUCKS.

LECKHAMPSTEAD, BUCKS.

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	346	397	519	499

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the Relief of the Poor -	£. 413	£. 437	£. 620	£. 593	£. 595	£. 531

"SIR,

"Leckhampstead, October 23d, 1833.

"I HAVE answered the Questions which I had the honour to receive from you, under date of the 15th instant, for His Majesty's Poor Law Commissioners, in the best way I am able, and I hope I have made myself intelligible to you.

"I beg to observe, that in stating the expenditure of the five years previous to our change of system, and the five years subsequent thereto, the county rates are included, with all the charges usually paid out of the poor-rates. In the first series, they were so mixed up in the accounts, that I could not separate them; their being included in both, the proportionate saving is the same, although the county rates have been considerably higher the last five years, and, if left out, the expenses of the poor would have appeared lower for that period.

"In reference to the 11th question, I wish to add, that I am of opinion that some material alteration of the law of bastardy is imperiously called for; now any worthless fellow can escape the effects of the present law, particularly if he resides 15 or 20 miles distant. After the order of filiation is made by the Court of Sessions, the parish officers have no remedy (in case of neglect or refusal to comply) until a demand is *personally* made, which can easily be evaded, and which *very often* causes serious expense, vexation and trouble to parish officers.

"I remain, Sir, your obedient humble Servant,

"John Revans, Esq. Secretary, &c. &c."

"Jno Brickwell."

"ANSWERS to Questions (see p. 73) proposed by Poor Law Commissioners.

"Answer to Query No. 1.—By the establishment, in the autumn of 1827, of a poor-house for the maintenance of the aged and infirm, and for the employment of children, we have reduced the expenses of the parish about one-third. (See my Evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 17th June 1828, page 45, where the rules and regulations are printed at length.)

"2.—By adhering strictly to the statute of 43d of Elizabeth, and by setting all the children that required relief to work, feeding and lodging them in the poor-house, we have done away entirely with the bread system, or head allowance, now totally unknown in this parish; and the alteration induces our poor to look out for employment for themselves and children, which before they did not trouble themselves about.

"3.—3d of November 1827.

"4.—In the winter of 1826-7 the scarcity of employment was such, owing to the depression on the value of agricultural produce, that the overseers were directed by the vestry to look about the neighbourhood, and contract for some work to employ the poor, which they did at a considerable loss, after which it was thought better to establish a poor-house and maintain them, instead of giving relief in money.

"5.—Being

The bread system
abolished.

“ 5.—Being myself a small proprietor, and the largest holder of land in the parish, to prevent the whole of my property from being sacrificed by the mismanagement of the poor, I found it absolutely necessary to use some extraordinary exertions to rescue the parish from the effects of the system they were then following, the evil consequences of which I had long been pointing out to them without effect.

“ 6.—The alterations were strongly opposed, at the beginning, by almost all the rate-payers, and some of them induced their landlords, who were non-resident, to interfere, and threw every possible obstacle in their way, (considering it to be a novel scheme, and could not possibly answer any good purpose,) thereby causing the poor themselves to be very refractory and ungovernable, so much so, that I was, at several times, very near giving it up altogether in disgust; but my representations to the magistrates fortunately induced them to support me, (being myself proprietor of some premises in the parish, which I converted, or I should not have succeeded in procuring the necessary buildings from any of the other proprietors,) I persevered, and I trust the result has proved with good success. I should probably have experienced less opposition had the overseers *by law been subjected to a fine or penalty for relieving able-bodied paupers* (by giving money) *instead of setting them to work*, as the 43d of Elizabeth requires them to do. I had no reason to complain of any obstruction from the small tradesmen, except the ale-house-keeper. The poor-house is supplied with provisions by open contract; monthly notice is given; a vestry is assembled every four weeks to receive tenders, and there is no dissatisfaction whatever expressed by any of the tradesmen.”

As a proprietor, found it absolutely necessary to use extraordinary exertions to rescue the parish from the old system.

Alterations opposed by almost all the rate-payers.

The change supported by the magistrates.

Further inquiry was made of Mr. Brickwell on this head, and he returned the following answer:

“ Your inquiries ‘ whether farmers and tenants have not opposed a change of system, from a feeling on their parts that in the end they would not be benefited, but that landlords would avail themselves of an improved system by advancing rents, and that the old system gave them greater facilities in making shopkeepers and others contribute towards the payment of wages, &c. &c.’ would perhaps apply in large and populous villages and towns, where there are a great many little shopkeepers and other rate-payers, not occupiers of land, but not to such parishes as this, where all the rate-payers are occupiers of land, having hardly a tradesman resident in it; and in all the opposition I experienced, I never heard such reasons brought forward in support of it; but I must confess that I have heard in some parishes it does prevail, and I am inclined to believe that feelings of a similar kind are entertained at Padbury, Tingewick, and Finmere, all populous villages near this, having many rate-payers not occupiers of land, particularly the two former.”

“ 7.—It appears to be included in answer to 6th question.

“ 8.—There is no permanent overseer appointed in this parish, but a *general vestry* meet every other Thursday (that being a convenient day) at a room for the purpose at the poor-house, where all matters relative to the management of the poor are ordered.

“ 9.—There is an evident improvement in the manners and conduct of the labourers. They are now desirous to keep their places when they get permanent employment, and endeavour at the same time to obtain work for their boys. It has become a common remark in the neighbourhood, that the poor in this parish are most orderly. The system has a tendency to advance wages, by inducing the employers to give full pay, making up wages by the parish being no part of the system.

“ 10.—Forty-three were formerly chargeable, cost from 6*l.* to 10*l.* per week. Now there are three only relieved out of the house. Number in the house as under:

Whose subsistence costs weekly	4 widows, aged.
From 3 <i>l.</i> 0 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> to 3 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i>	2 young women, with an illegitimate child each.
Or,	2 girls under 14 years of age.
From 2 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> to 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	4 old men.
per head per week.	14 boys under 14 years of age.

“ The women and girls make lace, the boys plait straw. The others have procured employment themselves.”

On this head also, a further inquiry was made of Mr. Brickwell, to which he returned the following answer:

“ In reply to your letter dated 26th October 1833, I have to observe on your remark that ‘ There were formerly 43 labourers chargeable, and now only 3,’ the 40 have mostly found employment within this parish; there may be four or five employed generally in the adjoining parish of Lillingstone Lovell, where they have not a sufficient number of labourers for their ordinary work, and at some periods of the year others obtain work in the neighbourhood. Since the change of our system the farmers are more inclined to employ labourers; but before they would leave all the work that could by any means be put off until some *roundsmen* came to their turn, or until they could get *men at reduced wages*, the parish making up the remainder; now the case is different, that inducement for protracting their work is done away with, and there is a more *regular supply* of labour, the men find it much easier to obtain work *at fair wages*; none are driven out of the parish by our improved system, but we do observe a greater desire and anxiety to obtain work amongst the labourers than was formerly the case.

“ There were in 1830 three labourers desirous to emigrate to North America; one was a married man with a family of small children, one a widower, and the other a single man (three adults only); we assisted them by paying their freightage, and allowing them a small gratuity on their landing at New York. No others have left the parish. The three now relieved—one is a broken-down farmer whom we have no desire to put into the poor-house, one a cripple, and the other a decayed tradesman long resident in a distant county, and we have not required that he should be removed from the connexions of his early life.

“ 11.—No distinction in wages is made between the married and single, the single men when not taken by the farmers are mostly employed at task-work *out of the house*, by the overseers or surveyors of the highways. I am not aware that improvident marriages are more frequent than formerly here; but there are always some in every parish who have no idea of thinking for the future, who generally marry improvidently, and entail a serious expense on parishes. Cases of bastardy are as common as usual; but, I believe, not more so. I am not aware of any new resources in this part to enable the poor to get additional employment.

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" Since the establishment of 'beer shops,' the lower orders in this parish are evidently becoming more demoralized, from the facility such houses now afford them of meeting the most profligate and abandoned characters in the neighbourhood. In this small place we have increased from *one* to *three*. One in particular, from its situation, *near a wood, a mile from the village, and on the confines of the county*, is particularly adapted for such purposes, and where young men and women frequently spend *the Sunday* and often the following day, if not two; no one can even remonstrate without incurring their resentment, and the risk of having some private injury done, either to their persons or property.

" 12.—I think the moral effects in the parish are apparent by the improved manners and conduct of the poor generally; they appear more attentive to their work, and do not rely so much on parish aid as formerly; they are more contented and happy. The pecuniary saving to the parish will be best seen by a statement below, of the expenses of the five years previous to the change, and the five years subsequent; ending 25th of March in each year. Annexed also is given the average price of wheat in each year.

Five Years previous.						Five Years subsequent.						Observations.		
Dates.		Price of Wheat per Quarter.		Annual Expenditure.		Dates.		Price of Wheat per Quarter.		Annual Expenditure.				
		s.	d.	£.	s.	d.			s.	d.	£.		s.	d.
1824	-	62	-	727	15	-	1829	-	66	3	555	9	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	*Extraordi- nary illness.
1825	-	66	8	857	9	8	1830	-*	66	6	660	1	5	
1826	-	57	1	771	17	7	1831	-	66	4	595	5	8	
1827	-	54	-	896	11	10	1832	-	58	-	629	13	7	
1828	-	56	-	918	10	3	1833	-	54	-	560	4	8	
				5) 4,172	4	4					5) 3,000	14	5 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Average -				£. 834	8	10	Average				£. 600	2	10	
Showing a saving of £. 234. 6. per annum.														

" The diet is laid down in the rules and regulations to which I have before referred, viz. meat three days in the week, pudding two days, bread and cheese two days.

" The females are kept in one part of the house and the males in the other; there is accommodation for a few married persons to sleep, but at the present time there are no married inmates; only widows, single young women and girls. The females walk in the garden, and are allowed to visit their friends by asking leave; the boys have a large yard for play-hours, where the men walk when they are not at work; their friends are never refused admission to visit if they conduct themselves with propriety. There are two single women with bastard children employed in the necessary work of the house; and girls are put out to service, as often as places can be procured for them; and boys are apprenticed at the expense of the parish, there being no funds whatever left for charitable purposes in this parish.

" The Answers to these Questions refer to the parish of Leckhampstead, in the county of Buckingham, and situate near Buckingham.

" October 23d, 1833."

" Jno. Brickwell,
of Leckhampstead aforesaid."

[With respect to the effects of improved modes of administration on able-bodied paupers, see the evidence of Mr. Thomas Langley, Mr. Leonard, and Mr. Wm. Hickson, *post*, under the head LABOUR FOR ABLE-BODIED PAUPERS. See also the evidence stated with respect to the CHARACTERS OF THE LABOURERS TO WHOM PAROCHIAL RELIEF IS INELIGIBLE, OR WHO ARE INDEPENDENT OF IT.]

THE CITY OF LONDON.

Richard Lambert Jones, Esq.

The union of the
small parishes.

I AM one of the trustees of the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, and have been so upwards of 20 years. I have also served the offices of overseer and churchwarden.

For many years past I have considered that the great thing to be done for the better management of the poor was the union of the small parishes, and the management on a larger scale, comprehending the whole of the city of London. It might be managed as the poor of Worcester, Bristol, and other large towns, are managed. I have mooted this plan for years. Under such a system the poor might be managed much more cheaply and better; the deserving object would be much better taken care of, and work and discipline would be better provided for the indolent. All the expense of the removals between parishes in the neighbourhood would be saved, and the imposition by parties applying to different parishes would be suppressed. The superintendence of the paid officers should be by a board elected by the rate-payers; but this board and all the local boards should be under one direction. This would be necessary to prevent these boards getting rid of burthens themselves, by creating much larger ones for other people. The magistrates should all be members of these boards, and should be bound to attend on stated days, when they should transact the magisterial business, but there should be no appeal to the magistrate except at the board. Another point of amendment which I would submit is that of rating, and a more summary mode of enforcing the payment. I can see no reason why the same power should

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE CITY OF
LONDON.*The same power given
to the collector of
rates as is enjoyed by
landlords.*

should not be given to the trustees and other officers to enforce the payment of the rates that is entrusted to the landlord. This more especially applies to property under 20*l.* a year. The landlords charge most exorbitant rents for such descriptions of property; the landlords intimate to the tenants that they may get off by an appeal to the humanity of the magistrate. There being no appeal against the landlord's process, he comes in first for his exorbitant rent; there is no appeal against his proceeding; although he is less likely to be, and is in fact, less humane in the pursuit of his own money than the trustees are in the pursuit of other people's money. I know from my experience as a trustee of Cripplegate, and as a trustee of the parish of Islington, where there is an immense quantity of small tenements.

From my general knowledge of the house property in the city of London,* I am of opinion, that if the poor-rates are permitted to go on in their present course, they must absorb the landed property of the country. In some of the best of our streets we find a difficulty of getting tenants or any rent for our houses; which is the effect of the tithes and heavy rates. The tithes are of minor importance, they are fixed; the poor's rates are the great evil, both in amount and progressiveness; and there is no chance of its being abated by the present management.

Mr. Francis Hobler, Chief Clerk to the Lord Mayor of the City of London,
Examined.

I HAVE been in office now forty-four years; I have been chief clerk about twenty-seven years.

After the Witness had been examined as to the routine of the transaction of the parochial business, he was asked,—

Do you order relief to known thieves if they apply for it?—Yes, for we cannot let them starve.

Do you ever refuse to order relief to be given to prostitutes who declare they are in want of it?—No, sir; can we let them starve because they are prostitutes?

Are paupers ever punished as paupers by the Lord Mayor?—Some of the paupers are sent to the tread-mill, but it is scarcely a punishment for them. They say frequently, "Thank you, my lord, we shall do better there than at the workhouse;" and I think that to many of them the tread-mill would not be a punishment; the Lord Mayor's footmen have more severe labour in running up and down the stairs of the Mansion-house. I believe it has been tried.

On the whole, a great number of cases occur where applications are made for relief, in which none of the usual sources are available. A great deal of money is dispensed in this manner at the Mansion-house. A woman with a train of children comes to London to seek her husband, and cannot find him; all her money is gone, and unless she obtains immediate relief she is lost. In these instances some temporary relief is administered; and a great deal of money is dispensed at the Mansion-house with very good effect. This money is taken out of the fees, and accounted for to the Corporation.

Most of the charities are mischievous. Children are born in charity, bred in charity, and buried in charity. A labouring man is now no longer a noun substantive; he is a mere adjective of a parish or of a parcel of charities. If the mother has not the good fortune to get into a lying-in hospital, there is some charitable association of ladies, who send a midwife and a box of swaddling clothes; sometimes they come and pray by them, that's another of the new things, and if she prays too she is sure to do well. Formerly there was some saving to meet this contingency, of which due notice is always given; there is now no provision of the baby-linen, no bottle of gin or cordial provided: there is now no providence of this sort, and they lie-in like cats at the expense of their mistresses. In schools and in other ways there is always some charity for the child to lean upon; and these charities are nice jobs.

*Charities in the City
of London.*

I do not think I remember more than one case in the whole course of my experience where the second magistrate refused to agree to sign an order upon the parish which the other magistrate was ready to sign. Not the least inconvenience would result if, in cases of orders of removal and other cases, the signature of one magistrate were sufficient. It would greatly facilitate business, and would save trouble and expense. In general the adjudication is a farce; the magistrates sign what is prepared by the clerks. In cases of bastardy, however, there is some cross examination, and there is an adjudication, and I think that in those cases two magistrates might as well attend.

*Magistrates' adjudications.**In cases of orders of
removal a farce.*

One good effect of uniting the city parishes would be to take away the personal feelings which govern the administration of relief in them. A person frequently gives offence to a great man in a parish, perhaps by not bowing low enough. That person applies for relief, when the great man replies, "No, I'll not give you relief unless you go into the workhouse." I fear there is a great deal of this in the small parishes which there would not be in a district. Again, we have 97 parishes, with all their complete establishments, all acting differently. Every year they have their new officers, who are subject to continual impositions. Some come in as reformers; others are full of the milk of human kindness, and are imposed upon in proportion. There are vagabonds who go about hunting the new parish officers. I have known as much as thirteen or fourteen pounds a day obtained from parishes by fraud of the new overseers in the season. The impostors say they are in great distress,

*The union of the city
parishes would be
beneficial in diminishing
the exercise of
personal feelings.*

* Mr. Jones had been chairman of the city lands committee, and of the bridge loan committee, by which a vast amount of house property is managed, and also of the London-bridge committee, before which the value of the house property taken down was investigated.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick.
Esq.THE CITY OF
LONDON.

distress, and have the fever, and dare not come into "his honour's house." "His honour" goes up stairs, and tells his wife what a scene of misery he has below. He is immediately cautioned not to expose himself to fever, and to give them their money, and send them off. Another troop comes with the same story, and are sent off with money in the same manner. Permanent officers would be better, with proper sureties.

The parish accounts are brought to us to sign, when I have had occasion to observe, that the charge for casual relief is usually very high: it may be all very right, but the charges all look very high.

EXAMINATION of Mr. *William Payne*, Second Clerk to the Magistrates of *Guildhall*.

IN our part of the city the whole of the orders of removal devolve upon myself. We begin at twelve.

I take all the pains I can, for the sake of the magistrate.

Every case is investigated at Guildhall, so far as it can be. The examination is taken by the magistrates' clerks.

It would be a matter of relief to the parish, and a saving to the officers of their time, and to the parishes of the expense. It would also greatly facilitate our business, to render the signature of one magistrate alone necessary for parochial business.

Parish officers complain that they have frequently to wait during long intervals of time, whilst the lists of prisoners are gone through. We examine the prisoners on the list in custody first, and take the pauper cases last. Some days we sit from twelve o'clock until four, and on other days from twelve to six; I have known them to be as long as from twelve to seven o'clock. During all that time the parish officers who are summoned for twelve precisely have to wait. This is a great grievance to them, but we cannot relieve them, as we never know what the extent of the next day's business may be. It may be short, or it may be very long.

We have no uniform practice in the City, there being 26 magistrates; that is the great evil. Every week there is a different magistrate, and therefore a new law; for as each magistrate has his own views of the law, and commonly acts upon a different system, we may be said to have 26 different systems of Poor Law administered within our district.

In the three years of my performance of the office of coroner for the city of London and the borough of Southwark, I have had about six cases of starvation. In one there was some censure passed on the parish officers, but generally I have not been able to trace the fault to parish officers. In this case a man had applied to the parish officers, and had not done so a second time when he might have done. He had besides some objection to applying for relief. In another case an Irishman had been offered to be sent home, but he refused this, and in consequence died.

EXAMINATION of Mr. *John Myles*, Churchwarden of *St. James's, Duke's-place*.

[This testimony was read over to Mr. *Millar*, the Assistant Overseer of *St. Sepulchre's* Parish, and his expressions of concurrence are inserted.]

IN our parish we have no vestry clerk, and I collect all their rates and transact all their parochial business; I have been concerned in parochial business nearly twenty years, having assisted the vestry clerks of other parishes.

I consider that the great want of all the parishes within the city is an equalized rate. The parishes which have no poor at all should be compelled to contribute to the burthens of those parishes which are burthened with poor, who are all more or less connected with the richer parishes. The workmen employed by the shopkeepers of *St. Michael, Cornhill*, or *St. Peter, Cornhill*, or *St. Gabriel, Fenchurch-street*, lodge in the poorer parishes, where the lodgings are cheaper.

Mr. *Millar*.—I perfectly agree with this.

In some of the parishes there is great contention, fraud and loss from the inequality of the assessments. In our parish formerly the assessment was very irregular: the paving rate, the poor's rate, the church rates and the minister's rates were all on different rentals. Some houses would be assessed at 20*l.* in one book and 25*l.* or 30*l.* in another. This excited discontent and confusion, as parties would contend that the assessments were too high, and produce as evidence the books in which the assessments were the lowest. We remedied this evil by getting the parishioners to consent, in general vestry, to appoint two respectable surveyors to survey the parish, and value each house. The inhabitants all signed their consent to this valuation, and a rate was especially made to pay for it. There is now no discontent on this score, and there can be none. If the same process were pursued in all the parishes, an immense deal of contention would be saved. The mode of rating should be somewhat similar to that of the land tax.

The next want is the management of the paupers, by means of two central boards.

Very great frauds I know are committed by persons obtaining pensions from different city parishes in the city at the same time. The subdivision of the city into numerous small parishes affords very great facilities for the commission of fraud. The parishes are in general very wealthy, and do not make the requisite inquiries. The frauds, too, are of a nature which cannot be detected in the present state of things, and they are only detected by accident. One mode of working the frauds is by a combination of this sort: there are three old women for instance, one residing in *Cripplegate*, one in *St. Sepulchre's*, one in *Bishopsgate*, or in a different part of the town. These three old women will lay their heads together,

Every week there is a different magistrate, and therefore a different law.

Uniformity of system in rating, the great want of the City parishes.

Central Boards of Management necessary to prevent frauds. Instances of the frauds committed in the City of London parishes.

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together, and agree to acknowledge each other as residents, by which they are enabled to obtain relief from several different parishes by giving a different residence to each parish where they claim relief. Thus, when the officer makes inquiry at the house of the old woman at Bishopgate, whether Mary Jones (the old woman at Cripplegate) lives there? The old woman at Bishopgate says, "Yes, she does; that they live together; that she is a worthy creature, and in a very necessitous condition." The old woman of Cripplegate will go and lodge at times with her friend at Bishopgate, in order to give a colour to her statement, and so on with the others. By accident I once detected a man who was an inmate of Lambeth workhouse, and at the same time receiving a pension of 5s. a week from our parish, and 5s. a week from St. John's, Hackney. I constantly hear of these frauds in the other parishes.

Mr. Millar.—All this is matter of constant experience with me.

Now if there were a central board, to which applicants for relief must go, it would be impossible that these frauds could be carried on to any extent, and the frauds committed on the various city parishes would be put an end to. I believe that one-fourth of the paupers are imposters. I have no doubt that, by a central management, the rates might be reduced in the city one-third, and the present establishments of officers maintained.

Mr. Millar.—In all this I fully concur.

Many people are very favourable to an extended management in the city, but do not like to part with the power of apportioning the relief themselves. I think this objection might be met by forming the boards from delegates from the different parishes, in the same manner as commissioners for the courts of request. These boards might have their sub-committees to manage various departments. The magisterial business of the parishes of the city of London is now transacted in a very slovenly manner. How can it be otherwise when only two hours is given at the Mansion-house for the transaction of both the civil and criminal business of the city. The chairman of the central board, and a deputy chairman who should preside at the second board when business required two boards to sit at the same time, should be both magistrates, in order that they might transact parochial business at once. In this way an immense deal of time and money would be saved, and you would have persons of experience in parochial law to decide upon such cases. The appointments of the chairman or the magistrates should be with the Lord Chancellor or the Lord Chief Justice, in order that more efficient persons might be appointed, and there might be less jobbing. Besides, the chairman should be independent of the delegates from the wards, whose proceedings it would be his business to control.

Objections to the remedy for the frauds that it takes power from Overseers.

Mr. Millar.—This comes very nearly to what I have myself publicly suggested. The saving of public money would be immense, and we should by such arrangements put to rout the hordes of people who now live by imposition.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Samuel Millar, Assistant Overseer of St. Sepulchre's, London.

I HAVE been three years and a half in office as assistant overseer; in nearly all the cases where a second magistrate is required to sanction any proceeding, the second magistrates attend unwillingly; they are generally brought from other regular business, and have to be sought for, and sign whatever is put before them as a matter of course, relying on the case having been investigated by the other magistrates' clerks. From the whole of my experience in the city of London, I should say that a second magistrate was quite useless as the business is now conducted. I never in the city knew an instance of the second magistrate disagreeing with the first. The magistrates are accustomed to sign orders of removal in other places than where the first magistrate sits; I have taken eight or ten to a magistrate, which he has signed as a matter of course, without any inquiry. Apprentices are generally bound in the presence of two magistrates. I have known two days delay very frequently; I have known that we have had orders of removal wait as long as four days. In cases of bastardy and orders of removal, the evil of the present system of doing business consists in delay. In the case of summonses for refusing relief, the great evil is their uniformity of decision in favour of all applicants. We are also under great difficulties from the magistrates' system of prison discipline.

Transactions of parochial business by the City Magistrates.

In one case where a woman was sent to the Compter for having had four bastard children, she sent her compliments to me, and she was very much obliged to me; she did not wish to come out again, she was so very comfortable there. I made inquiries into the case, and found that she expressed what would most probably be her real feelings, for she was in a state of comfort probably beyond that she had before obtained.

I have had importunate paupers apply to me for relief, when I have threatened them with the Compter. They have said, "that is where we want to go to," and they have voluntarily accompanied me to the Compter, and some of them have gone before me, and ran up the steps to the door, and waited until I arrived. Seeing this state of things, I have balked them by not following up the charge. Considering this state of things as to the prisons, I am often astonished that myself and the beadle have not been more frequently and more desperately assaulted.

The annual overseers are incompetent to deal with the cases of applications for relief from the want of knowledge. I have known overseers also strain points in favour of persons whom they have known in business or otherwise. In consequence of such instances, and the inconsiderate humanity of some, and the want of knowledge of others, and the mischiefs which has been occasioned from these causes, an order was made that no one but myself

Characters of the distributors of rates.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

THE CITY OF
LONDON.

Character of the rate
receivers.

should administer the relief, except on board days. I am not, however, able to carry this rule into effect with strictness.

With respect to the out-door relief, there must, from the very nature of it, be an immense deal of fraud. There is no industry, no inspection, no human skill, which will prevent gross impositions essential to this mode of relief.

By far the greater proportion of our new paupers are persons brought upon the parish by habits of intemperance, and the others are chiefly pauper children or hereditary paupers. After relief has been received at our board, a great portion of them proceed with the money to the palaces of gin shops, which abound in the neighbourhood.

[See further the Evidence of Mr. Millar as to the relative characters of independent labourers, and also as to Education.]

Mr. Joseph John Hubbard, Managing Clerk to Messrs. Saunders & Comyn.

I have been concerned professionally about 10 years in parochial matters, and during that time have conducted the business of six different parishes in the city of London.

Assistant or paid
Overseers absolutely
necessary for the
good management of
parishes.

In few or no instances
are tradesmen per-
sonally acquainted
with the paupers in
the small City
parishes.

Character of settle-
ments in the city of
London.

I consider that assistant overseers are absolutely necessary for the good management of parishes. In very few instances indeed, even in the smallest parishes in the city, are the overseers and churchwardens found to attend with that diligence which is requisite for the welfare of a parish; while from the shortness of the period during which they retain office, it is utterly impossible for them to become practically acquainted with the heavy duties devolving upon a parochial officer. In few or no instances are the tradesmen in the city personally acquainted with the paupers, their present habits, or their former condition in life; in the great majority of cases fresh paupers come as strangers, as strangers not merely to the persons in office, but to the parishioners in general. The really necessitous poor seldom apply until they are greatly advanced in age; and the chances are, that the parties with whom they gained their settlements are dead, or have removed; the bad invariably wait until all witnesses of their former habits have departed, or go and settle themselves in another parish where they are entirely unknown. In the city the larger proportion of the settlements are by hiring and service, the next by the old 4s. settlements, the next by renting tenements under the new Act; and then come birth and servitude. There are very few birth settlements in the city, there are almost as few settlements by apprenticeship. I think that the greatest number of frauds are attempted and committed under 4s. settlements; one mode of fraud is to find out premises that have been re-built, and then paupers will swear that they rented a room at 4s. a week in the old house, and have done no act to gain a subsequent settlement.

Developements of an
impostor by an order
in the farm house.

In Saint Bene't, Gracechurch, the other day, a man and his wife applied and swore to a 4s. settlement in this way, and I have no doubt but we have had many before; we gave them an order to go to the farm-house, on receiving this, the woman evinced much anger as well as disappointment, and said, "They do not serve us so in other parishes;" they went away without using the order, and have never returned. But farm-houses and watch-houses especially, as at present managed, are not always repulsive.

The witness, in speaking of attractions of workhouses, gave the following instance of their force:—"I know one instance where a stout, able-bodied man, who had been a mechanic, having got into a workhouse, became so fond of it that he never would stir out of it, if he could help it, and kept there with his wife and children. An annuity of about 100*l.* a year was left to him; but he was so lost to every feeling of independence, or rather so much alive to the comforts of a workhouse, that even with this annuity he would not quit the parish (St. Stephen, Coleman-street.) We continually took him before the magistrate for riotous conduct, and refusing to work, but he repeatedly told the magistrate that he never would work—that no one should make him; and, in short, that he would do as he liked, which was, to remain in the workhouse. The parish received so much of this man's dividend as was wanted to reimburse them, and he continued upon the parish, having his wife and children constantly in the house."

Alterations in settle-
ments recommended.

I humbly conceive that if the Law of Settlement was reduced to two points much good would be effected; I mean, 1st. Birth settlements, these to operate till the party is emancipated from his father's house by the second; and 2dly. Residence for twelve months, either as *servant, lodger or householder*.

Parochial business
recommended to be
taken away from the
present Police Magis-
trates.

I would respectfully hint that the greater portion of parochial business might be more beneficially conducted, in a department separate from that of the police office, which often embraces a strange mixture, for instance, we have sometimes to wait several hours, and sometimes also on two or three days with an interesting and promising boy or girl, about to be bound apprentice, there seldom being two magistrates in attendance to take the binding at once. During this time the child has to witness the usual scenes of depravity, for the check of which magistrates were appointed, and its young mind is there brought into contact with the worst of scenes, and at a period when of all others it should be farthest removed from contamination.

Again, paupers are always kept for some time while their examinations are being taken, if not mixing with the criminals, at all times hearing all the charges, and thus familiarizing themselves with the details of the commission of fraud. I do not say one word about the unpleasantness to the parish officers; some of them, men of the first standing in the city, and who, of course, are called upon to perform the duties in common with the other inhabitants; but I submit further that a greater and more profound knowledge of parochial law is required where so important a part of its execution is committed, and greater facilities for the

the quiet examination of paupers, and the sifting of their statements, than is found amid the active bustle of a police office. I think the question of non-payment of rates is the only one which should be left with the magistrates, and that if a parochial commission or board was formed here and there, taking the centre of a large district for each, the business might be more effectually attended to. One barrister, well acquainted with the Poor Laws, as a commissioner or judge for each board, with a secretary or chief clerk, and one or two secondary clerks, would be sufficient for each board.

The advantages to result from this would be very numerous. The expense saved to each parish in appeals, &c.; the time of the officers; the certainty of the pauper's settlement; the prevention of multiplied settlements, and by which, no doubt, at this moment, many, very many, vagabonds are obtaining a good livelihood for themselves and families, are not amongst the least of the benefits that would accrue.

And I do not see what objection can be raised to this plan; the unpaid magistracy cannot surely object, while, if no diminution is made from the salaries of the others, they cannot object either.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Booker, Assistant Overseer of Bishopsgate.

ABOUT three weeks ago we had two girls, desperate girls, prostitutes, who were sent to Bridewell for 21 days for refusing to work. When they came, they applied to me to know what they were to do; I gave them a shilling, and told them they must go to work at the dust-yard, where they would receive a shilling a day for sifting cinders. On the following day they returned to me, saying that they could not go to work on account of having no shoes. I gave them shoes and stockings, and they promised me they would go to work the next day; but on the following day I found them at the Mansion-house, applying for a summons against the parish officers, stating, as a reason why they had not continued at the work, that they had not been used to such hard work as that, and they would not go; they would rather go back to the tread-mill: that was what they told the Lord Mayor.

These girls had corrupted the boys in the workhouse when they were taken in, and we could not think of taking them back again.

The Lord Mayor recommended that relief should be given them for the present, saying, you cannot let them starve. We have ordered them work, but we expect that they will ultimately be saddled on the parish. Old women of 60 were doing what these girls under 20 refused. We have some reputed thieves in the house, and we have a great many reputed thieves receiving pensions from the parish, and our only expectation of being quit of them is their being transported or removed at the expense of Government.

I am confident that there are no people who have a pound a week wages who live so well as the people in any well-dieted workhouse. I very seldom see meat in the houses of the lower classes, and they have it regularly in the workhouse.

Single men can find coarse food and lodging at 1s. a day, 4d. of which is for lodging and the rest.

We are frequently waiting for two magistrates: frequently expending a pound in consequence of the delay, when if the business could have been done on the first day we should not have spent 5s. I have been a whole week frequently, and have waited as much as eight days with families of paupers for second magistrates. During this time the pauper families are kept waiting amidst a crowd of thieves and bad characters. It is absolutely requisite, I think, to provide a remedy for this evil. It would be easy to have all parochial business done by one magistrate.

The Irish who have gained settlements in our parish are the most troublesome. From my conversations with parish officers, in which I find we are all of the same opinion on the Irish, I believe they would agree, as the result of the experience of the Irish as paupers in England, that if the English Poor Laws were established in Ireland, the abuse of the Poor Laws would be infinitely greater there than it is here. The Irish are the most determined paupers: the regular systematic English pauper is bad, but the Irish pauper is much worse. The Irish in our parish manage to get the greatest proportion of our bread and coal gifts, and the other gifts which are not strictly limited to parishioners. The Irish will never take No; they extort by importunities; they are noted as "beautiful criers;" that is, they cry in a way that is quite extraordinary to those who are not used to see them. The English paupers do take refusals, and are not so importunate.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Thorn, Assistant Overseer of St. Giles's, Cripplegate.

THE following is an account of the inmates of our workhouse, the great majority of whom have followed occupations in which good wages were obtained, and from which they might have saved enough to provide against the contingencies of old age or sickness, if the Poor Laws had not made provision for them, without reference to their former characters and conduct.

INMATES in the House of St. Giles-without-Cripplegate.

1 accountant, 1 barber, 1 boot-closer, 1 bricklayer, 1 brush-maker, 1 cabinet-maker, 2 carpenters, 2 cutlers, 1 farmer, 1 gardener, 1 gold and silver wire-drawer, 2 grocers, 1 hot-presser, 1 iron-founder, 14 labourers, 1 lamp-lighter, 1 lath-render, 1 paper-hanger, 1 pen-cutter, 1 pin-maker, 1 plasterer, 29 porters and servants, 1 ring-maker, 7 sailors, 1 saw-maker, 1 sawyer, 1 school-master, 7 shoemakers, 2 silversmiths, 3 tailors, 1 tinman, 1 turner, 1 upholsterer, 1 victualler, 2 warehousemen, 2 watchmakers, 1 whip-mounter; total 98.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE CITY OF
LONDON.Administration by
district boards recom-
mended.Character of the rate
receivers.People out of the
workhouse earning 1l.
a week, do not live so
well as the paupers in
the workhouse.Character of the Irish
paupers.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.*Masters have concealed the real amount of wages, to secure the reduction of them by parish allowances.*

We employ some of the out-door paupers in carrying home the gifts of coals, and pay them liberally for doing so. These men when they apply for relief, and when they are told, "Why, we gave you money the other day," say "It is very true, but then we were in debt to our landlord," or "the chandler's shop-keeper, and we were compelled to pay him when we returned from labour." So they always calculate on the relief.

The out-door relief in the city of London would require almost one man to look after every half dozen of able-bodied men, and then he would only succeed imperfectly in preventing fraud. They cheat us on all hands. I have had instances where the masters who have employed out-door paupers, have given such answers to my inquiries, as to leave no doubt in my mind that the master concealed the real amount of wages, for fear that if he caused the parish to reduce the man's allowance he should have to pay him higher wages. There is no protection whatever from the growing evil of the increase of the able-bodied out-door poor, which is one of the greatest evils of the system, but in finding them labour out of town.

[See further the testimony of this Witness under the heads of "EDUCATION" and "CHARITIES."]

THE WORSHIP-STREET DISTRICT.

I had not proceeded far in my inquiries under this commission, before I found that so extensive a body of facts, suggestive of the necessity of amendments of the law was supplied, by the voluntary statements of each class of officers concerned in its administration, as in general to enable me to avoid receiving any evidence of a nature to admit of dispute on their parts. This abundance of uncontrovertible evidence, I was glad to believe, entitled me to decline receiving testimony which imputed blame to determinate individuals, or which was tendered to substantiate complaints with relation to the conduct of particular officers in particular cases. For this reason, and because the complaints or charges, although more direct and highly coloured, did not in substance go beyond the admissions of the officers themselves, when closely examined, I declined receiving the evidence of misconduct which was tendered to me against the officers of two populous parishes whom I had examined. I regret that in several instances, and especially in the course of my inquiries in the large district of the magistrates of the Worship-street Police Office, I was compelled to deviate from that course of proceeding. In my preliminary inquiries I found that the officers of the principal parishes comprehended within that district, generally complained of the mode of administering the law adopted by the magistrates, and contrasted it with that pursued by Mr. Walker and the other magistrates of the adjacent district of the Lambeth-street Police Office; stating how much they believed their parishes would gain, if they could be included within that district. It was also stated that in the parish of Christchurch a memorial had been presented to His Majesty's Secretary of State, from the parish officers, praying that their parish might be transferred from the district of the Worship-street Police Office to the district in which Mr. Walker acts.

*Characteristic of the administration of the law by the magistrates at Worship-street,**and by the magistrates at Lambeth-street.*

The characteristic of the mode of administering the law adopted by Mr. Benett and the other magistrates at Worship-street, was represented to be a ready reception of the complaints of the paupers, and an habitual active interference in their behalf against the parish officers.

The characteristic of the mode of administering the law adopted by Mr. Walker, and the other magistrates at Lambeth-street, was represented to be the general refusal to entertain the complaints of paupers, or to act in their behalf against parish officers; and in other respects the method is thus characterised in the words of Mr. Walker, in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Lords. When he was asked, "Do you think the law (meaning the Poor Laws) sufficient for its object?" he replied: "I think it would be better if there were no law at all. I act as if there were none; entirely according to my own discretion, and my aim is to abolish pauperism altogether."

The importance of ascertaining, as far as practicable, the effects of these opposite modes of proceeding was too great to allow me to reject the complaints with relation to the conduct of the magistrates in particular cases when those cases were adduced as illustrative of the general practice; still less could I (however desirous to avoid giving offence) permit myself to compromise my duty by omitting to receive the statements of the witnesses, as to the evil effects of that practice.

The principal witness, with relation to the mode of administering the law by the magistrates at the Worship-street, was their chief clerk, whose evidence was corroborated by that of the office-keeper; and also by the voluntary testimony of the parish officers examined with relation to the principal parishes within the district.

After this evidence was taken, Mr. Benett was made acquainted with the fact of complaints having been made against the mode of administering the law, in which he took the most prominent part, and he readily attended to answer them. The whole of the passages in which he is named or alluded to were carefully read over to him, and every word of what he desired to have inserted in answer or explanation was duly recorded. Three afternoons were devoted to the business, and several of the answers which he had given on the first day of his attendance were again read over to him on the second and third days, and such additions or verbal corrections as he thought proper to make were also inserted; nor was the communication with him closed until he said that he had nothing further to state. He then appeared to be entirely satisfied with the course pursued towards him, and with his own answers. A short time afterwards some proofs of these examinations were struck off, chiefly for the use of the Commissioners; but several of them got into further circulation, and obtained insertion in a public journal, and excited much observation, and possibly

some censure from those who took a different view to himself of the mode of administering the law which he especially had adopted and defended; amongst whom, I am aware from subsequent statements, are several of the most experienced magistrates in the metropolis. Shortly after this publication, he complained that the Report had been sent to the press without having been submitted to him for his "correction or further observation." He also complained that the portion of Mr. Brushfield's examination had not been read to him. The circumstance must have entirely escaped Mr. Benett's memory, as I have a very distinct recollection that every word of the passage was read over to him, and that he declined making any observations upon it. He has, however, been subsequently allowed to re-correct his former answers. These re-corrections are printed in italics, and the Board will see to what material extent they alter the passages, or vary the effect of previous answers, and how far his case would have been injured had he been deprived of the opportunity of making further additions; but after the time which had been previously afforded to him, and his declaration of his entire satisfaction with the course which had been pursued with relation to him; I cannot admit that he would have been entitled to complain of being deprived of an opportunity to make further observations or corrections; for he has had no corrections to make: his previous matter stands as it did, and he has only made *additions* to it.

EXAMINATION of Mr. *William Heritage*, Chief Clerk to the Magistrates at
Worship-street.

IN the Worship-street District are comprehended the following parishes :

St. Luke, Old Street;
St. Leonard, Shoreditch;
St. John, Hackney;
St. Matthew, Bethnal Green;
Tottenham;
Edmonton;
Enfield;
Hornsey;

St. Mary, Islington;
The Liberty of Norton Folgate;
Christchurch, Middlesex, commonly
called Spitalfields;
The Hamlet of Mile End, New Town.
The Liberty of the Old Artillery
Ground.

The parochial business of these parishes occupies us an hour a day upon an average, at all events. On Saturday we are much more occupied than on other days. I rather think that the resident magistrates of Enfield and the distant parishes transact some of the parochial business, as we have very little from thence. In the summer time one magistrate generally goes out of town; and of the two who are left one is frequently called away by unavoidable business.—[*This is seldom the case. W.B.*]—On those occasions parochial business is sometimes delayed. At all other times we have two magistrates. The Police Act requires that there should be two magistrates in attendance from twelve o'clock each day until three. Now, at our office, the second magistrate seldom comes in until two o'clock.

Mr. *Benett*.—Because the overseers themselves do not appear before two o'clock, and frequently not until nearly three, and the night charges are very often not over until two o'clock, and particularly on the Monday. One of the magistrates promised the overseers to appear regularly at one o'clock, to expedite their business, which for a time was done; but the overseers at length did not come at the hour appointed, and delayed their appearance until half-past one or two o'clock, and sometimes half-past two.

I have known them to be as late as three.—[*This is seldom the case. W.B.*]—Since the new Act, giving jurisdiction to two magistrates in assault cases, sometimes the assault cases which require two magistrates are called on first, sometimes the parish business requiring two magistrates; and as one or the other class of cases happens to be long, so the other is delayed.—[*I do not see how this can be remedied, two cases cannot be heard at a time. W.B.*]—This delay to those who come from distant parishes is a very serious inconvenience, and so is the expense of attending with all the parties. This occurs all the year round. On an average, I think, we have about twenty cases of orders of removal weekly. The parochial cases requiring two magistrates may be about thirty a week: forty a week if the Irish pass cases are included. If our parochial business were fairly transacted, it would require at least two hours each day.

At our office (where all the three magistrates are barristers) a difference of opinion may arise on cases of orders of removal, or otherwise, and proceed to the extent of one refusing to sign the order, which the other had agreed to sign: this does not occur oftener perhaps than once a month. The examinations for orders of removal, and other parochial matters, are always brought to us prepared. With the great quantity of our other business, it would be impossible with our present establishment to get through them. The magistrates invariably read the examinations for the order of removal, having the pauper before them. I am satisfied that by requiring only one magistrate great service would be rendered to the public; considerable expense and delay would be saved. Magistrates are singly entrusted with much more important business; and in the performance of that business, I see no occasion for additional help. If in those other cases two magistrates were required, the differences of opinion would be as frequent, if not more frequent, than in parochial cases. The instances where the orders of removal, after having been refused, are afterwards allowed to pass, may be about six in the course of the year.

P. L. (A.)—III.

N 3

Looking

*Great service would
be rendered by allow-
ing one Magistrate
to perform the
duties which are
now performed
by two.*

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Summonses against
parish officers granted
indiscriminately.Have seen parties
apply for summonses
when in a state of
intoxication.

Looking at the character of the vestry clerks within our district, who are mostly very respectable men and good lawyers, I can see no danger whatever in allowing orders of removal to be made entirely on the responsibility of the parishes, and without any intervention of magistrates. The only danger would be the interest of a professional man in getting the costs of an appeal: if the professional man was paid by salary for all the business which he performed, there would be no danger whatever in the alteration. From what I have observed, I think that in all parochial business it would be of service if professional business were paid for by salary.

The paupers are kept waiting amidst crowds of thieves and irregular characters, greatly to the danger of their morality, as well as the public health.

With regard to applications for summonses against parish officers for refusing to grant relief, I may state, that summonses are granted indiscriminately upon application at our office.—[*The summons is the only channel through which the pauper's case can be heard. W.B.*]—When the parish officers attend upon the summonses, relief is ordered almost as indiscriminately.—[*This is erroneous. W.B.*]—We have constantly fine, hale, hearty-looking young men applying for relief. I have seen them apply in a state of intoxication. I, seeing an applicant in this state, and hearing the magistrate about to order a summons, (although it is unusual for a clerk to do so,) have got up, and said, “Why, Sir, I really believe that this man is intoxicated;” for the case was such, that I really could not sit still and hear the application without making the remark.

Mr. Benett.—I have witnessed some of the paupers, from starvation and weakness, reel and fall down in the office at Worship-street. Debility has very much the appearance of intoxication, and has, I have no doubt, frequently deceived the lookers on. But if a mistake is made as to the cause of it, it would act as a great oppression of the pauper, and therefore such insinuations ought not to be lightly attended to by the magistrate.

The answer has been in an imperative tone, “Let him have a summons.” I have afterwards been spoken to by the clerk who makes out the summonses, who has said to me, “The man is drunk, there can be no doubt of it.” In one instance an applicant came up, and his drunkenness was noticed by the attendants. His condition was intimated to the magistrate, who ordered the man to be brought before him. When he came in, he appeared to be going towards the fire: a constable named Hatfield put up his hand to prevent him going against the fire, as he was staggering, and certainly would have gone into the fire if Hatfield had not stopped him. Upon which the magistrate said, “Don’t push the man into the fire, Mr. Hatfield.” I think those were the words. Hatfield replied, “Your worship, I was endeavouring to save him from falling into the fire.” The magistrate said, he thought it might be weakness, or something to that effect.

Did the magistrate ask any questions of the man as to whether he had been drinking that day?—I do not think he did. He merely asked some questions as to where he had lived, and when he had applied for relief. A summons was granted to this man. This, I think, was in the summer time.

Such instances of granting relief to persons in a state of intoxication have, however, occurred only in the case of Mr. Benett, who is a remarkably humane man.—[*The instance mentioned was (if true) of granting a summons, not ordering relief, to a person in a state of intoxication. The rest of this clause is beneath all comment. W.B.*]—Mr. Broughton is also a very humane man, who occasionally, when he cannot help the parties, will give them a shilling out of his own pocket. Mr. Benett, however, never does this; he takes the money out of the poor-box.

Mr. Benett.—I established that poor-box about ten years ago in Worship-street, for the purpose of relieving paupers whose cases did not apply to any particular parishes.

He has been accosted by people in the streets for relief, and he has said, that he has asked them to accompany him to the office: he has granted them summonses. In those instances where the applicants do not appear to have slept in an adjacent parish, he has given them money out of the poor-box, and sent them away, with directions how to qualify themselves for relief, by sleeping in a parish;—*this is the law. W.B.*—“and mind,” he would say, “you are entitled to relief in the parish where you sleep, and if it is within my district, and the parish officers won’t relieve you, come here again, and I will give you a summons, and will compel them.”—[*If the pauper be in real distress, and is refused relief by the overseers. W.B.*]—Two of the magistrates will frequently order relief to be given without any summons.

Mr. Benett.—As far as relates to me, this is positively erroneous. I never sent a man to be relieved without a summons in my life, nor do I believe that any magistrate in the office has ever done so.

I have known an officer sent with as many as twenty paupers in a day, with an order to see them relieved. It was not sufficient that the officer left the paupers with the overseer; he was enjoined by Mr. Benett to see them relieved, and if there was no overseer to be found, he was directed to relieve them out of his own pocket, the magistrate promising that he would undertake that the overseer should reimburse him the next day. This has been a practice for several years: it has occurred most frequently on Saturdays. Now the parish officers frequently attend, to render these steps unnecessary.

Mr. Benett.

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Appendix (A.)

Mr. Benett.—This is generally on the Saturday night, when the overseer has neglected to attend. Of course, it would not be done when the overseer is present, or relief is given for the Sunday.

To day, three hearty young women, from eighteen to twenty years of age, applied for relief; they had their hair in curl-paper: summonses were granted them without any inquiry. I mentioned this case to Mr. Twyford, but he seemed not to like my interference, and seemed to think we had no discretion. Last summer, a working man, a gardener by trade, applied for a summons for parochial relief. Seeing the man very hearty in his appearance, and dressed very fairly, and being sorry to see such a man apply for parochial relief, I asked him what he was; he told me that he was a gardener. I said I wanted a gardener, and would give him a job at half a crown a day. He appeared pleased, and came to work; he did his work very fairly. He was employed by others as well as by myself; but whilst he was there all the gardens were robbed: the valuable roots under ground were pointed out to him, and all those valuable roots were taken. In consequence of this, he was not employed further; although I am satisfied that he might have continued in work, and earned his guinea a week there for life. This man has subsequently on several occasions applied to the magistrates for summonses, and the parish officers have been compelled to relieve him. I know I have stated his character publicly. This man is now, I believe, a pauper in Hackney parish. I knew it was of little use stating to the magistrates what his character was.—[*I never heard of this man's case before. W.B.*]

Excepting on the Saturdays, when the applications are most numerous, under all circumstances there are generally more paupers come when Mr. Benett sits: he sits on Wednesdays and Fridays. Sometimes an officer will come in and say, "There are paupers at the door, asking whether Mr. Benett is sitting?" We smile. Sometimes, when they are not satisfied that Mr. Benett is not there, they will come and peep in; and when they are satisfied that he is not there, they are off.

From the whole course of twenty years observation of the conduct of different magistrates, I am decidedly of opinion that it would be highly beneficial to prevent the interference of the magistrates in cases of parochial relief, except in cases of extreme distress, or, as the Poor Act now calls it, "in cases of urgent necessity;" and indeed the cases of urgent necessity must be extremely closely defined, or they would construe all cases as of extreme necessity. The Act now allows only one magistrate to interfere in cases of "urgent necessity;" but they deem all cases to be of urgent necessity, for the summonses are uniformly ordered by one magistrate.—[*Urgent necessity applies only to orders, not to summonses. W.B.*]

The state of disorder amongst the paupers in some of the parishes,—Bethnal-Green and Shoreditch, for example,—as reported by the officers, is excessive. There can be no doubt that a number of the worst prostitutes receive parochial relief as out-door poor. The officers have reported to me, that it is not uncommon for the old prostitute to say to the young one—"Poll, do you receive your reg'ars from the parish?" *Regulars* is a cant term in use amongst thieves, to denote the regular division of the produce of their depredation; in this instance it is applied to the parochial allowance. The young prostitute has replied that she did not receive it. "You fool," is the reply, "I'll tell you how to get it: go to the overseers and ask for relief, and say you are starving; and if they won't relieve you, go to the magistrates, and they'll make them give you sixpence a day."

And when the applicant comes before the magistrates, do not the overseers object to give relief, on the ground of her bad character?—Frequently they do.

And what usually is the magistrate's course?—He will say, "I am not surprised at her becoming a prostitute, when probably the unfortunate girl is driven to it by necessity, in consequence of the insufficient relief which is afforded. You may take her in the house, or you may relieve her out of the house; I will not control you in that respect."—[*The magistrate has no power by law to control the overseer, whether he will take the pauper into the house or relieve him out of it. W.B.*—If the applicant be an old hand and an abandoned one, the officers will say, "We will have nothing to do with her; we would sooner give her double the sum to be rid of her;" for they contrive to create riots and disorders in the house, and the officers are glad to get rid of them. One girl of this description, named Sarah Cornish, recently died as a pauper in Shoreditch parish, at the age of about 24, having destroyed her constitution by a career of profligacy of at least seven or eight years duration. She was well known at the police office by all the three magistrates. She had been repeatedly punished for misbehaviour in the workhouse, and had been committed to Newgate for felony. Yet she repeatedly obtained summonses from the magistrates, and relief from the parish. After she had been in Newgate she applied for a summons, and was ordered relief by the magistrate who had committed her, Mr. Broughton, and who told her that he was sorry the jury had not convicted her; for she had certainly committed the felony with which she had been charged, and it would have been a good thing for her if she had been sent out of the country. He said he really was weary of seeing her so much in that office. She had a summons, and went to the parish, where I believe she remained until she died.

In the instances of prostitutes who apply for relief, is their dress and appearance frequently such as to make their way of life evident to the by-standers?—Not the least doubt of it; but in no instance, even where their appearance is such as to admit of doubt, but where their habits are known to the officers present, may those officers say a word, unless a question is asked of them. If an officer did state what he knew, he would be desired not to interfere unless the question were asked.

Reports,

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Relief ordered to
known bad charac-
ters.Enquiries of
paupers for Mr.
Benett.Be beneficial to
prevent the inter-
ference of Magis-
trates in cases of
parochial relief.Regular relief
given to prostitutes
and thieves.Examples of prosti-
tutes relieved.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.*The public would
derive great benefit if
the administration of
relief were wholly
taken away from the
Police Magistrates.**Witnesses observa-
tion of Magistrates
who are lawyers, and
Magistrates who are
not lawyers.**Law as made by
magistrates liked better
than law as made by
the legislature.**Juvenile vagrancy
and delinquency.**The greater part of
thieves and vagrants
have parochial relief.**The present mode of
administration favours
profligate paupers at
the expense of the
deserving.*

How frequent are the applications of this sort?—Every day; we are never without them; sometimes we have as many as seven a day.

Young girls?—Yes, a large proportion of the applicants are young girls, and boys in their teens. The officers seeing these things have spoken to the magistrates, but without effect. An old officer (Armstrong) has said, "Why, really, your worship, I am a house-keeper in this parish; the rates are already so high that we cannot pay them; and I do not know what we shall do if people like these are to have relief whenever they ask for it:" the magistrate has replied impatiently, "I cannot help that I must grant them a summons." [These general observations ought not to influence the magistrates in particular cases. W.B.]

I am of opinion that the public would derive great benefits if parochial business or the administration of the Poor Laws were wholly taken from the police magistrates, and given to some central authority. Business would be facilitated; it would in every respect be better done, and there would be a great saving of the parochial funds, and a check to the growth of pauperism. By vesting the administration of the Poor Laws in one central board, great advantages would be derived in uniformity of practice, which would thereby be better secured. If the law were administered by lawyers, it would be requisite to have it skilfully framed; for they (as compared with magistrates who are not lawyers) are in the habit of construing enactments strictly, and following the letter, magistrates who are not lawyers are rather in the habit of exercising a sound discretion, and frequently give greater satisfaction by departing from the strict letter of the law.

[The Witness was questioned at considerable length on this point; and the particular instances upon which he founded his general statement were examined. In effect, he declared that the multitude of penal statutes which a magistrate had to administer were so badly framed, and so oppressive, especially those where the penalties are arbitrarily fixed, that they occasioned much mischief when they were put into execution. Lawyers did execute these laws, considering themselves tied by them, whereas the unpaid magistrates, or the county magistrates, who were not lawyers, exercised "a sound discretion," that is, they executed these statutes or set them aside, or "modified them," (i. e. fashioned laws for the occasion,) which gave the parties more satisfaction than the law made by the legislature. Such, the Witness declared, was the result of his experience for many years at a public office in one of the most populous districts.]—[What then is the use of an Act of Parliament or the laws, the one to be perverted and the other to be disregarded. W.B.]

In our district there is a vast deal of juvenile vagrancy and juvenile delinquency, which are very generally united; in the cases of vagrancy, the boys are usually under the direction of older persons, and in cases of delinquency the boys act independently or with one another. The children are neglected by their parents, who are hard-working, and have not time to look after their children; frequently the parents are profligate, and given to habits of drunkenness, and will not look after them. It is not unfrequent in Shoreditch to see father and mother both drunk, and the children about them pulling them and crying to them to go home. In our district, juvenile delinquency as well as vagrancy has greatly increased. Where we have three adult thieves we have perhaps seven boys or girls. I believe that most of them, either by themselves or their parents, have parochial relief. Here is where the evil of the increase of crime lies. Remove this source, and the great bulk of the regular depredators would in time be removed.

The present mode of administration of the Poor Laws decidedly favours the profligate paupers at the expense of deserving objects. Where deserving objects do come into the same house, they will be persecuted until they do as the rest do.—[I know no remedy for this, but a classification of paupers. W.B.]

I think that while the responsibilities of parents who have the means of maintaining and educating their children should be increased, additional powers should be given them for the correction of youth who are able and yet unwilling to work. I have seen instances of poor gray-headed old men appearing in tears at the bar to answer summonses of parish officers for neglecting to maintain their children. An old man has a son, to whom he has given an education and the means of obtaining a livelihood, and yet the lad has contracted habits of idleness and profligacy, and persisted in remaining a burthen upon his father; positively refusing to work whilst his father was capable of keeping a house over his head. The magistrates have held this person bound to keep the young vagabond.—[A parent is obliged by law to keep his children if he has the means, and is not permitted to leave them to be supported by the parish. W.B.]—In the same manner profligate parents have been fastened upon their industrious children. A large proportion of the population have got to that pitch of late (as I conceive, in consequence of the state of the Poor Laws) that no forethought, no prudence is deemed necessary: those who have the means, those who have been prudent and have worked, are bound to maintain them; and if they cannot, the industrious and paying people of the parish must.

EXAMINATION of Mr. John Othen, Office-keeper at the Public Office, Worship-street.

[Has been in office 18 or 19 years.]

I GENERALLY have to make out the summonses granted at the instance of paupers against parish officers who have refused them relief. Of late years the applicants have greatly increased in number, as well as badness of character; in badness of character particularly.

I should

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

The same bad characters seem the constant applicants for relief.

The old prostitutes heard to tutor the young ones as to the means of obtaining their pensions.

Characters of many male applicants for relief.

Their characters brought under the observation of the magistrates.

Assailants of Parish Officers.

I should think that there are upon an average thirty paupers receiving summonses daily. A very large proportion of these paupers are Irish, in St. Luke's parish especially. I think that there are more females amongst the applicants. I see the same characters constantly. From their dress and deportment I know a large proportion of them to be prostitutes. They come so frequently that their faces are quite familiar to us at the office: they are seen in the streets, and their ways are well known to the officers. They are chiefly young girls, from twelve to three-and-twenty years of age. Every day we have a proportion of not less than ten of this description amongst the applicants from the various parishes. In many instances their personal appearance and their style of dress is so striking, that even the magistrates cannot fail to know their characters at sight. I remember the case of a girl named Cornish, her constant appearance at the office, and Mr. Broughton admonishing her, at the time she applied for a summons against the parish officers after she returned from Newgate. A summons was given to her. We have several frequent applicants—prostitutes, nearly as bad as she is. They invariably have summonses when they apply, and say that the overseers have refused to give them relief. Their cant name for the parish money is, "their reg'lars:" this is 6d. a day for each person, male or female: this is the allowance which the magistrates stipulate that they should have from the parish. I think I have heard the old prostitutes, in waiting at the office, tutor the young ones as to the mode of getting "their reg'lars." The instances are frequent where prostitutes have been brought up and dealt with for disorderly conduct in the streets as prostitutes, who afterwards apply for summonses against the overseers, and the summonses are invariably granted.

Amongst the males who apply for relief are a number of able and hearty young fellows, who are vagabonds at large, and who will not work so long as they can get a sixpence from the parish. Their general object is, the allowance of 6d. a day. I believe that there are many of these men who make out their living by petty depredation. Their language is the very worst of slang. The worst sort of them have a gipsy slang language which the officers do not understand—not the ordinary slang. I have known instances of persons of this description who have been brought up before the magistrates for night disorders, and on such charges as taking drunken men into houses, and then plundering them; but it is very rare that the property is found; they have given it to some accomplice, and there is no proof against them, and they are discharged.

And are these men, whose characters are well known, discharged? are they not punished in any way?—Oh no, sir.

Are they not sent to prison under the Police Act?—Sometimes they are, but not when brought in this way.—[How does this apply to the Poor Laws? I do not see how the judicial acts of magistrates can here be inquired into. W. B.]

Now, when these men apply for summonses against the parish officers for relief, are summonses granted to them?—Yes.

The magistrates must know their characters then, having seen them before?—Oh, yes.

Is this the description of paupers who are the ringleaders of tumults which have been mentioned, where the parish officers have been attacked?—It is. We have had it happen, that after their cases have been heard and relief has been ordered to them, but when it has not been quite so much as expected, they have threatened to "serve out the overseer," and the paupers have waited outside the office in clusters, each encouraging the other, and waiting for their respective parish officers. If the beadle happens to be in waiting, he conducts the overseer home; but where the beadle has not been present, the overseer has applied to the magistrate for protection, and an officer has accompanied him home. In some instances, however, the beadle is not sufficient, and additional protection is required. When the paupers are paid at their own houses, the beadle is sometimes insufficient to protect the overseers, and additional protection is sent for. In one instance, one of the ringleaders of the paupers at Bethnal-green went into the committee-room when the committee were dispensing relief, and seized the box in which the money was kept. It was reported that a fight and a scramble ensued.

What do you see of the conduct of this class of paupers after relief has been given to them?—Some of them go away, and we have no opportunity of seeing where they do go; but there is one public-house next door to the office, and there are two about sixty yards distant. Myself and other officers of the establishment have seen them in these public-houses, sitting over their pints and smoking their pipes, immediately after relief had been given to them. The magistrates were told that those who had declared themselves to be starving, instead of going to buy bread or solid food, went and spent the money at the public-house; and we have now reason to know that they go further off.

Mr. Benett.—I never recollect being so told.

Sometimes they have applied for relief in a state of partial intoxication. I remember a case where a man in this condition applied. All the officers and every one in the office, except the magistrate, believed he was drunk, and I could swear he was drunk; we remarked it to one another; he staggered towards the fire, when an officer put his hand up to prevent his falling in. The magistrate (Mr. Benett, who is a very feeling man for the poor) reproved the officer for doing so. The officer replied that the man was tipsy, and he did it to prevent him from falling into the fire. The magistrate's reply was, that he did not believe that the man was tipsy, and that it was want and weakness that made him stagger. The magistrates have so little knowledge of people of this class of life, that they cannot see what is seen by us who know more of them.

P. L. (A.)—III.

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Mr. Benett.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

Mr. Benett.—That is natural enough. The magistrates can hardly be expected to know so much of this class of persons, as those who mix with them, and converse with them and overhear them.

But in some instances the condition of these people is so marked, that by-standers, tradesmen or others in the office, have remarked that the applicant had been drinking.

I remember the circumstances of the case of a gardener, who obtained employment from Mr. Heritage, and of his stating the man's character when he (the gardener) applied for relief; but I do not recollect the result.

When the magistrate has on the one hand before him an individual whom he has seen before as a prisoner for some fault, which stamps his character, and who applies for relief, and on the other hand the parish officer, who suggests that work might be got for the man, what is the usual course of the magistrate?—The magistrate generally says to the overseer, "This man swears that he is in danger of starving, and unless you can prove to me that he can get work, but will not work, you must relieve him."

Does the parish officer ever tender such evidence?—Very rarely; unless it is when the officers have stone-breaking which the pauper refuses to work at; [*or any other work that the pauper can do. W.B.*] In that case the magistrate refuses to order relief.

In cases where the parish officer suspects that the applicant, being a strong hearty man, might obtain employment, or that he has employment or means of subsistence, is it usual for the magistrate to postpone the case to give the parish officers an opportunity of investigating the case?—No. The magistrate says, "This man swears he is in want of subsistence, and you must give him relief; if you hereafter find out that he has the means of subsistence, bring him before us, and we will punish him."

Mr. Benett.—This relief is only for the exigency of the moment, and not permanent. This relief is never permanent, but only day by day as the exigency occurs.

In the great majority of cases the oath of the pauper is conclusive. Of late, Mr. Broughton has in many instances refused relief to the sturdy beggars, as he has had better opportunities of seeing that class of persons. If the pauper says that he has had work, but that it is insufficient to maintain him, the magistrate says, "You must work; and if you cannot live by it, the overseers must make it up to you; they must make it sufficient."

Mr. Benett.—I think that this is a very bad and demoralizing system, to pay the labourer either wholly or partially out of the poor's rates, because it converts him into a pauper who can support himself by his just earnings.

We have had at times sets of paupers confined in the lock-up rooms preparatory to their being taken to the house of correction. On these occasions they call out to their companions on the outside, using slang language. When young able-bodied men come for relief, they assemble in the passage of the office. There the young female prostitutes also wait, and a crowd of this description is kept waiting together for three or four hours. Their language is extremely offensive, and their conduct equally bad. Since the prevalence of the cholera, we have more frequently cleared this passage, and they assemble outside. Their language is so bad, that the inhabitants who are of the working class complain of them. We have almost daily scenes of half a dozen young men and young women of this class on the outside, pulling each other about and conducting themselves offensively. I have heard passengers sometimes say, on seeing them at their tricks, "What a shocking thing it is to see a parcel of young thieves and whores applying for public relief!"

Have you seen amidst this sort of crowd the young children of persons of creditable situation, deserving objects, who are compelled to apply for relief?—Yes; children of all ages; their parents have sometimes exclaimed against what was going forward.

And have you no means of separating them from the deserving and better objects; have you no place for the widow of a creditable man and his orphan children to wait in, but amidst such a crowd as this?—None; it would be a good thing if we had; children of 11 or 12 years of age are so forward that good morals are easily corrupted. It has been frequently remarked that it would be of great service to provide some means of preventing this evil. There is seldom less than 30 or 40 waiting; sometimes there is more than 100, including the friends and associates of prisoners; and amidst all these, the deserving poor have to wait. Persons might go away from this if they choose, but it is in general uncertain when the parish officers will come; and besides that, it is uncertain at what time the case may come on, and this obliges creditable people to wait. It is impossible children should lose any thing by being there. There are none of the overseers who attend regularly; in the great majority of cases the applicants have to wait two days before they can get their cases heard; children as well as adults have ample opportunities of forming acquaintances.

Mr. Benett.—This inconvenience arises from the bad architectural arrangements of the police office at Worship-street, but this inconvenience will be remedied, as a new office is erecting in Finsbury-square; and every accommodation and convenience will be given. [*But this is now unfortunately frustrated. W.B.*]

It frequently, constantly occurs, that the applicants for relief inquire who is sitting. If it is one magistrate, they will say, "We will go away, we shall get nothing;" if another sits, they say, "Oh, that will do; we will stay." They make themselves acquainted with the character of particular magistrates and their decisions, and know them well. The most humane magistrate is the one generally inquired for, and for whom they seek; this magistrate has been in office 10 or 12 years. It is the class of paupers who come the most frequently, the young and able-bodied, who make this application. It is with the most humane

Conduct of many of
the paupers so bad
that people of the
working classes com-
plain of them.

Corruption from the
meeting of large
classes of paupers.

humane magistrate that the worst class of paupers succeed best. I have known them go away when they found that this magistrate was not in the way.

The stories which the paupers tell, and the way in which they succeed, is often a subject of merriment to the officers who know their characters.

Do not the officers state what they know to the magistrates?—The officers dare not; they do not like to do it for fear of appearing forward; there have been instances where they have been reproved for stating what they knew; they seldom or never do it.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

ST. LEONARD, SHOREDITCH.

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY Expended on Relief of the POOR.																																																																														
	In- habited.	Unin- habited.	Build- ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.																																																																															
1801	5,732	381	—	—	—	34,766	9,224	—		£.																																																																													
1811	7,426	214	144	—	—	43,930	10,387	—	1776	3,737																																																																													
1821	8,269	494	93	24,843	28,123	52,966	12,828	—	1785	4,777																																																																													
1831	10,698	1,367	397	31,877	36,687	68,564	15,830	16,708	1803	7,927																																																																													
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EXAMINATION of Mr. John Ware, Vestry Clerk of St. Leonard, Shoreditch.

HAS been in office since the latter part of November 1831, but has been connected with the parish as a trustee of the poor, and otherwise, for more than 12 years.

This parish has been governed under a private Act of Parliament since the year 1813.

There are now about 120 trustees of the poor, who are elected partly on the nomination of the Board of Trustees and partly by the parishioners in open vestry. The parishioners elect one half the members of the Board, and in the case of there being an odd one, they make the election. The fixed number of trustees is 72. Besides these, all persons in the parish who have real property to the amount of 40*l.* per annum are admitted to the Board on swearing to the qualification. The 72 trustees are appointed for life, unless they are disqualified by removal from the parish, by bankruptcy, or by compounding, or by not attending four times a year. To ascertain this, we have a book, called the signature book, for the purpose of determining the fact of their attendance. The whole number of vacancies which occur during the year are filled up on the Easter Tuesday, and though the whole of the vacancies may have occurred from amongst those trustees elected by the Board, the parishioners elect one half.

In my judgment, this is a very useful constitution of a parish, for populous parishes of this description; my leaning being rather to an increase of the popular power than a diminution, and this constitution providing at the same time for the retention of a considerable proportion of working men.

There are six standing committees: 1. The House Committee. 2. The General Purpose Committee. 3. The Pension Committee. 4. The Audit Committee. 5. A weekly Friday's Committee, provided for by the Act of Parliament. 6. The Stone-yard Committee.

Any member of the Board may attend these committees, and any member may attend and vote at the House Committee.

The House Committee is charged with the supervision of the house on matters relating to the house and the supply of provisions.

P. L. (A.)—III.

Parochial constitu-
tion.1. The House Com-
mittee's duties.

2. The General Purpose Committee's duties.

3. The Pension Committee's duties.

4. The Audit Committee's duties.

5. The Weekly Friday's Committee's duties.

6. The Stone-yard Committee.

The board, which consists of 120 members, works best when only from 25 to 30 are present.

A great attendance when there is patronage to be exercised, and then the Board does not work so well.

When the annual overseers relieved, they were much imposed upon.

A permanent officer appointed.

Effects good.

The General Purpose Committee is to consider and report on any matters referred to it by the Board, unless where especially directed to act.

The duty of the Pension Committee is to control the list of pensioners, to inquire into the grounds of their claims, and their circumstances, and determine the amount of the pension.

The Audit Committee is for the purpose of examining into the accounts and vouchers.

The Weekly Friday's Committee audits the books of casual and other relief during the week, and the pension books, and determines the relief to such persons as may apply on that afternoon. This committee attends to those matters that are temporary; the Pension Committee has jurisdiction over those cases which require permanent relief.

The Stone-yard Committee attends to the arrangements in the stone-yard for the supply of labour to the able-bodied.

In general, we find that the Board works the best when there are from 25 to 30 present. On occasions of election, such as the appointment to an almshouse, or of a boy to the Blue-coat-school, when a number attend, the general business, we find, does not go on so well. For matters of detail, it is of still more importance that there should be a previous reference to a committee. In the Board, the business is conducted in the form of regular debate; in the committees it is conversational, and the chairman is allowed to join in the discussion.

Besides the trustees of the poor, we have the regular parochial officers, who are trustees by virtue of their office.

Formerly, when the overseers relieved on their being annually elected, applications for relief were much more numerous and pressing immediately after the election. Advantage was taken of their want of knowledge to carry on every species of imposition. It would be generally beneficial if unpaid parochial officers could have a probationary year of service. It is a common remark with us, that we lose our overseers at the time when they have got the knowledge requisite to enable them to perform their duties. In consequence of its being considered that more was expended on paupers than might have been if adequate inquiry had been made by a paid responsible officer, whose observations were more constantly directed to the poor, the assistant was appointed. Though the general distress has been greater this year than last year in our parish, I do not think the amount of expenditure this year has been greater than the last. This I attribute, in a great degree, to the appointment of a permanent officer for inquiry, who has kept down as to casual, in connexion with the appointment of the Pension Committee, which has also the assistance of the visiting officer. The relieving overseer makes inquiry of the parties themselves. The visiting officer goes and makes inquiry respecting the parties at their own homes.

The removal of paupers might be quite as well and much more cheaply effected without the intervention of magistrates.

EXAMINATION of Mr. William Hickson, jun., of the firm of Hickson & Sons, Wholesale Shoe-warehouse, Smithfield.

Instances of speculation by parochial officers.

ON Tuesday, December 23, 1828, two persons came into the shop, and asked to see some shoes, and gave an order. They represented that they were parish officers of St. Leonard, Shoreditch. They then fitted on four pairs of shoes, of a superior quality, for themselves; the wholesale price of these shoes was 6s. 6d. each pair, the retail price was 7s. 6d. It is a custom in the trade, when any agent or other person gives a wholesale order, to allow him to have shoes for himself at the wholesale price. Thus when we have received an order from a merchant, we allow the clerk who brings the order, if he wants to purchase anything for himself, to have the benefit of the wholesale price. The parish officers, however, in this instance, told me that I was to charge 18 pairs of shoes instead of 12 (the number to be delivered), and that the money to be obtained for the six pairs not sent in was to cover us for the four pairs of the better sort of shoes supplied to them. I was very much surprised at this proposal, and I requested them repeatedly to state the manner in which the goods were to be sent in, and how they were to be entered, when they gave me instructions.

Was all this done in an ordinary business way, as if such a mode of dealing were familiar to them?—Quite so, to one of them especially.

And you sent in the goods?—Yes. I made the following entry of the transaction in the day-book.

" St. Leonard, Shoreditch,	Dr.	£.	s.	d.
18 pairs men's shoes, at 4s.	-	-	3	12
36 ditto women's, at 3s. 2d.	-	-	5	14
			<u>£.9</u>	<u>6</u>

12 pairs of men's shoes sent instead of 18, and four pairs of best wax fitted on the two churchwardens or overseers, who instructed us to charge 18 pairs instead of 12, to cover us for the four pairs.—W. E. Hickson."

We then sent information of the fact to one of the members of the board, that he might take such steps upon the matter as he thought necessary.

Have you any reason to believe that such transactions have been or are common in other parishes, in the supply of goods on account of the parish?—In some parishes we believe they

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they are common. We have supplied many other parishes in which similar irregularities have never occurred. In one instance, an overseer came to us, and promised us a large order for the parish, if we would allow him a commission of two and a half per cent., which we declined.

Was this offer made in an ordinary manner?—Yes, he appeared to consider it as a fair mode of trade. We had another instance, in which we supplied about 100 pair of shoes, not to a parish, but for a charity-school. The treasurer of that school ordered these shoes to be sent in to a small shoemaker, who sent them in to the school as from himself. We afterwards heard that he had charged a profit of 1 s. a pair on these shoes, with the knowledge of the treasurer of the charity.

Was this transaction conducted in a clandestine manner by the treasurer of the charity?—No; he stated his object to be to serve this tradesman, and that to do this he gave the order to him.

Have you any reason to believe that this is a common mode of persons in such situations serving friends who are tradesmen?—Yes, I believe it is very common. It is not in such instances as these usually done from what are called mercenary motives, but they think they are justified in serving their friends at the expense of those unknown people, the public. On the other hand, I have seen instances, where grievous sacrifices of personal interests have been made by parish officers to enable them to perform their duties properly. The remedy for these things would be, to place the administration of parochial money in paid responsible agents. From our observation as tradesmen, having had to do with many cases of bankruptcy, we can state (whatever attorneys may state), that the greatest benefits have resulted from taking the administration of bankrupts' effects out of the hands of tradesmen, who lost immense sums by jobbing, but more generally by neglect, and employing official assignees. I cannot speak as to the general constitution of the Bankruptcy Court, but I think that this appointment of respectable people, whose express business it is to attend to the administration of bankruptcy effects, is one of the best things that Lord Brougham has done for the country. I have no doubt that similar results would follow from the appointment of respectable and responsible persons to administer parochial affairs.

[See further evidence of this Witness under the head Education.]

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Necessity of paid and
responsible agents.

EXAMINATION of Mr. John Sawyer, Chairman of the Pension Committee of Shoreditch.

By a close investigation of the cases of the parties a sum of nearly 3,000 l. has been saved to the parish in the cases of out-pensioners and casual poor.

It is of great importance that parishes should be circumspect in the choice of overseers. I attribute the growth of pauperism to the choice of officers, for one successful imposter will breed 20 more. For this reason I have always been an advocate for a permanent overseer. The examination of our books will show the greatest differences in the systems of relief adopted by different men.

Are you not liable to frauds in the supply of goods at the instance of officers badly chosen; have you not had an instance of this in your parish?—Yes, we had one, a very bad affair; one churchwarden and one overseer were detected in procuring themselves some shoes at the parish expense.

How did they cover the transaction?—They had the keys of the store in which the goods for the workhouse were deposited. The shoes ordered were brought in whilst they were in the house; they took them into the store-room, and put them amongst the stock. The parish was not then in want of shoes, though the officers were. This was communicated by the tradesman to one of the trustees, Mr. Lawrence, who was a man of firm nerves and good talents, and he brought the case before the Board. The charge was stated in the presence of the two parties. They at first asked one week to answer it; the Board adjourned for a week to enable them to make their defence. They then refused to answer the charge, and they were both indicted. One of them, named Le Count, fled to America, and the other, named Hicks, suffered so severely, that efforts were made by his friends to get the charge abandoned, and it was carried by a small majority that the prosecution should be dropped; but he died in less than a week afterwards. When he was in a dying state he got out of bed by a convulsive effort, and said, "I must go to the vestry to clear my character." In a few minutes after he died. We now think that we have adopted securities to prevent the occurrence of any thing of this kind again.

In what condition of life were these parties; were they of respectable station?—They were considered such. Le Count was a watchmaker, and an old resident in the parish. He resided in Pitfield-street. Hicks was a retired gentleman, living in Old-street Road.

Peculations by
officers.
(See Mr. William
Hickson's Evidence.)How the Overseers and
the Churchwardens
covered the transaction.The Overseer and the
Churchwardens re-
fused to answer the
charge.Carried by a small
majority, that the
prosecution of one of
them should be
stayed.

EXAMINATION of Mr. John Coste, relieving Overseer of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch.

Has been in the office about a year and a half, but served the office of overseer during the years 1826 and 1827, and has resided in the parish during the whole of his life.

He deposed, "The most unpleasant of my duties is attendance at the Worship-street Police-office. Our business is generally upon summonses, such things as no magistrates ought to grant, except on the oath of the parties applying. I have been informed that our beadles have at times been greatly inconvenienced by there not being two magistrates in attendance at the office, and that our business has been delayed during a whole day in consequence."

P. L. (A.)—III.

O 3

Mr. Benett.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Practice of the
Magistrates at the
Worship-street
Office.

Mr. Benett.—This I can positively contradict. Not three times in the year in which there are not two magistrates.

In consequence of the practice which one magistrate (Mr. Benett) has pursued at Worship-street Police-office, I do believe that if that magistrate had the undivided control, it would be impossible for our parishioners to pay the rates.

Mr. Benett.—When I first went to Worship-street, in 1820, it was the practice to swear all the paupers on their primary applications for relief. I thought that trifling with the sanctity of an oath, particularly as the law did not require it, and also as the summons does not contain the assertion that the party has been sworn. I will add, as a matter of belief, that there is not a police-office in London where the paupers are sworn; and I must state also, that I object, as a magistrate, to swear any pauper in such manner until I am compelled to do so by law, as I will not trifle with the sanctity of the oath. The other two magistrates do not swear the paupers. We do not vary in our practice in this respect; but I never refuse to swear a pauper at the request of an overseer when the overseer is present, and paupers are thus repeatedly sworn by me. They have been repeatedly sworn by me for Mr. Coste himself.

My practice is invariably this. When the pauper applies for relief, the first question put to him is, "Do you live in the parish?" The second question is, "Have you asked the overseer for relief, and been refused?" If the answers are in the affirmative, I grant a summons. If the overseer does not appear to the summons, and the pauper applies again, I ask if he has given the overseer the summons. If the answer is again in the affirmative, I grant a second summons, with a recommendation in the margin, that immediate relief may be given to the pauper: it is only a recommendation. If the second summons is not attended to, and the pauper applies the *third* time, I ask him if he has given the second summons to the overseer, and if the answer is still in the affirmative, I send an order of 6*d.* a day for an adult, and 3*d.* a day for a child, for seven days, the Act of the 59 Geo. III. c. 12, s. 5, empowering me to make an order for fourteen days, or until the next petty sessions, where there is no select vestry. The order is served on the overseer by one of the officers of the establishment, who keeps a copy. This is my *general* practice; but in case of urgent distress, I send a summons, with the recommendation of "immediate relief" in the margin, by an officer, and also on the Saturday night, when the overseer does not appear to a previous summons.

His practice is without swearing the parties as to whether they have applied for relief, to grant summonses to all who choose to apply for them, and who choose to say that they are in need.

Mr. Benett.—That is true, and that practice must be continued. The pauper must have his case heard.

There is usually the following *nota bene* affixed to these summonses:—

"N. B. It is requested by the sitting Magistrate that this pauper may be immediately relieved."
(Signed with the Magistrate's initials) "W. B."

Mr. Benett.—This is the second summons, except in a case of urgent distress, and then an officer is sent with the summons, to explain the nature of the case to the overseer, who can appear before the magistrate, if he chooses to object, it not being an order. It is generally a mere matter of form for the pauper to say he has had no victuals that day, when the *nota bene* is at once attached.

Mr. Benett.—The recommendation is not an order, and the overseer can answer that *nota bene* if he likes, he not having answered the summons. It is, in fact, a caution to him, equivalent to saying, "That if you do not appear, and show cause why you do not relieve the pauper, an order will be granted."

It is very rare that any investigation into the real case of the pauper is made before this order is given.

Mr. Benett.—Who is to be examined; the pauper alone, who will make good his own case, or the overseer, who refuses to appear and state his case before the magistrates, which refusal has occasioned the order to be made? The examination of 40 or 50 paupers would consume from three to four hours, at three or five minutes each person, which at the office of Worship-street, where there are occasionally upwards of 70 persons committed for trial in a month, and where the great variety of other business presses so severely on the magistrates' time, that the office is frequently kept open until six o'clock in the evening, and the business resumed again at seven in the evening.

Since June 1831, I have received from the magistrates of this office about 590 summonses. Of these there were from—

Mr. Benett	- - -	240	} To the summonses of each	{ 109	} of these magistrates were	{ 46	} <i>nota benes.</i>
Mr. Twyford	- - -	179					
Mr. Broughton	- - -	167					
			attached	- - -	- - -	{ 27	

[By this it appears that the *nota benes* are not my exclusive practice, but adopted also by the other two magistrates. W. B.]

Mr. Broughton will tell the young and strong that the Poor Laws were not intended for them, and that he could not think of giving them relief. The above Returns show very nearly the different readiness of each magistrate.

There is generally no investigation whatever, and the parish officers have no means of knowing their circumstances previously.

Mr. Benett.—That is a neglect of duty on the part of the overseer, who is bound to inquire into the individual cases, that he may report their merits or demerits to the magistrate,

magistrate, and it is invariably done at the parish of Bethnal Green, the poorest and one of the most densely peopled parishes in the metropolis.

About two months ago I had an instance of this. A woman named Bartlett applied for relief to Mr. Broughton. She had been lately married, and she stated that she was in the greatest distress, and that neither she nor her children had had any food whatever all that day. I requested the magistrates to administer the oath to her. She was accordingly sworn, and I asked her whether she had any money about her: she swore that she had none. Having accidentally observed her in a public-house as I came to the office, and seen her take some change, I insisted on her pockets being turned out, when there was found in them some halfpence, and between 4s. and 5s. in silver. Mr. Broughton ordered her out of the office immediately. This woman had been in the habit of receiving 8s. or 9s. a week from our parish until before last Christmas, when I obtained information that she had had a legacy of about 300*l.* left to her, (she said it was only 100*l.*) This information was obtained by mere accident. There are the greatest impositions committed in this way.

In the year 1827, I had as many as 50 names on one summons, on one day, from Mr. Benett, and I venture to say that of these above 30 were bad characters, prostitutes and thieves, who ought not to be relieved at all.

Mr. Benett.—This is a proof of the justice of my complaint of the immense masses of paupers brought from the parish of Shoreditch before the magistrates of Worship-street. Many of these paupers ought to have been relieved without the intervention of the magistrates. In this instance, he says that 30 of the 50 were bad characters, who ought not to have been relieved. Why were not the 20 who were *not* bad characters relieved without the intervention of the magistrates; and were the cases of the 30 individuals objected to inquired into by the officer before the cases were brought before the magistrate? I do not think that the character of a pauper, if he is in distress, can be taken into consideration; for the Poor Laws were not established as a reward for good conduct, but as a provision for the person in immediate distress, and a person just discharged from the house of correction, or a prostitute, is as much entitled to relief as the most respectable pauper in the parish, because the principle of the English Poor Law is, that no one shall starve; therefore the magistrates are obliged to order relief to bad characters as well as good, if they are incapable of supporting themselves. If you refuse to persons who are bad characters relief when they are in immediate distress, the collective result must be very injurious to the best interests of society.

All this troop, about 50 persons, came to my door, with an officer at the head of them, demanding immediate relief on the magistrate's order. [*The overseer has said just before that it was a summons. A summons is not an order, and may be answered before a magistrate. W. B.*] I said, "No, I cannot think of letting the parish be robbed in this way; I shall attend the summons this night at the office." I did attend, and stated to Mr. Benett that I should insist on the whole of those 50 cases being gone into separately before I gave any money.

Mr. Benett.—To examine into these cases of 50 paupers, at five minutes per case, would take four hours and ten minutes, which is impossible to be done, and *unnecessary*, inasmuch as it was the duty of the overseer to have inquired into the cases himself, and relieved the deserving, and rejected the undeserving.

He was very warm, and said he was not going to have a vestry-room made of his office. I then handed him up the summons, and said, "That is your signature, and I am come to answer it." He then went into two or three of the cases. I think the first or second of these cases was that of a lad named Perkins. One of the officers told me that he knew that this Perkins had been at work that week, and had earned 8s. or 10s. This was proved. I then asked Mr. Benett whether such a lad as this ought to have had a summons, and an order for immediate relief. [*The summons was not an order. W. B.*]

Mr. Benett.—It being Saturday night, and the overseer having neglected to inquire into the cases, it would not do to risk the chance of rejecting really distressed persons, and forcing them to go without relief through the Sunday, or starving until the succeeding Monday.

Mr. Benett said, no; but that he had no means of inquiring into the cases. The lad was certainly discharged without relief. This lad has since been transported. I had no specific information, and had no means then of obtaining any with respect to the rest, and Mr. Benett having gone through about half a dozen of these cases, I then said to him, seeing him getting very angry at the prospect of a long detention, "I will take the rest of them into the house."

Mr. Benett.—It is the usual practice which prevails now for the overseers to attend at the office on a Saturday night, I may almost say with masses of paupers. I have known 100, for I have had them counted. I have then said to the overseer words to this effect: "There must be a great many distressed persons deserving of relief in this number; take them out, and relieve those who are deserving of relief, and bring back those whom you object to, and I will hear them separately;" and this has been frequently done by Mr. Coste. On these occasions I have sat at the office till ten and eleven o'clock at night. From the refusal of the overseers to relieve the paupers, and from their inattention to the summonses, such inconveniences constantly occur on a Saturday night.

Myself and the beadle then went away, followed by the train of paupers, (for on Saturday nights I find it necessary to take one or two beadles with me for personal security.) The paupers

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.*Instance of the
treatment of a sturdy
pauper.*

paupers used excessively bad language to us, and as they passed by-streets on the road to the workhouse, they slunk away, until at the workhouse, I think, we had only ten or a dozen, who chose to come in and accept the bread, for the want of which they declared to the magistrate they were starving at the time they first applied for immediate relief.

Mr. Benett.—This is very probable; but how is the magistrate to help that, if, upon the investigation in the office, the pauper succeeds in his imposition? It is the duty of the overseer to inquire into the cases of the paupers, and he might come prepared with the evidence to prove the fraud.

One day whilst I was from home an Irishman came to my house and demanded relief. My wife told him that I was from home and that she could not relieve him. He made a great noise in the passage, and swore he would not leave until he had done some harm. He had in his hand a stick as large as a broomstick. My wife was in great terror and so were the children, and they screamed out for assistance. Fortunately some one came to her assistance, and the fellow was taken into custody. He was taken to Worship-street, and the facts I have stated were proved against him before Mr. Benett.

Did it turn out that he had any claim upon your parish?—None; for when he came out of prison I passed him to Ireland. He was a mere tramp. He had never been seen in our parish before.

What was the punishment he received?—He was held to bail. Mr. Benett said that sessions would be so long (they might have been three weeks or a month from that time) that he hoped I would come at the end of about a week and beg the poor man off. I am in the habit of acquiescing in whatever a magistrate says, and I might have bowed or said "very well," but I am sure I made no express promise, as I know I felt very much offended that such sympathy should be expressed for such a fellow, and that any request of the kind should be made of me. However, my acquiescence might be construed into a promise. But I was very much engaged and did not perform it. Some days after the time at which the fellow was to have been liberated, I had occasion to go to Worship-street, when Mr. Benett looked at me very sternly, and said that I had not performed my promise, which was to attend and beg the man off at the end of a week. I said that my business had been very great, and that if I had promised, the circumstances of the case would be some excuse for my want of punctuality. Mr. Benett was very angry, very angry indeed, and declared aloud in the public court that I was not a gentleman, and that he would not take my word again. I told him that he was the only magistrate on that bench who would not take my word. In a few minutes afterwards he said in an authoritative tone, "Will you now beg him off." Knowing that it is very injurious to a parish to quarrel with a magistrate, I consented. The man was liberated on the same day, and on that same day he applied to the magistrate for a summons, which summons was granted, with a "*nota bene*" for immediate relief. I took the man into the workhouse and he was passed to Ireland.

Mr. Benett.—I recollect this circumstance. There was a promise made by Mr. Coste, and the day stated for the application for the man's discharge, but Mr. Coste did not keep his word.

I never applied the epithet gentleman to Mr. Coste in any way on this or any other occasion.

We frequently make the experiment of taking the applicants into the house with much the same results; but it by no means follows that when they are willing to go into the house they are deserving characters. They frequently get a magistrate's order to get into the house—

Mr. Benett.—This cannot be; the magistrate has by law no power to order the parties into the house.

But are no recommendations given which the overseers may call orders?

Perhaps he means by an order a recommendation. We often recommend the overseer to admit the parties into the house, but the law gives us no power to order.—for the purpose of getting clothed, and then escaping with the clothes; and very commonly when they escape with their clothes, they sell them.

Mr. Benett.—For this very reason I seldom recommend clothes to be given, and always object to money being given beyond the immediate necessities of the occasion, as I am well aware that is frequently spent in an improper manner.

If you will not let them out when they are once in, they will disturb the whole house, and annoy the old people. Sometimes we wish to keep them in as a punishment, but in general we are glad to let them go.

The evidence of Mr. Heritage and Mr. Othen, with relation to the bad characters relieved at the instance of the magistrate, and the behaviour of those assembled at the office, was read to the Witness. He stated that it was perfectly correct.—[*This person, being an overseer and not attached to the office, could only observe occasionally what was passing there; his unlimited assent, therefore, to what was read to him, could not be any very convincing evidence of the truth of the statement. W. B.*]

He stated that the girl, Sarah Cornish, whose character was as represented, was on the parish somewhat longer than they had stated; she was the terror of all the parochial officers in the parish. She was in the habit of saying when she received money—"Here! this goes to the gin-shop!"

We relieve on the Tuesday thirty or forty girls, and about twenty or thirty boys, the major part of whom I believe are either prostitutes or young thieves. There are even of our boys now in Newgate, to be tried during the next sessions. There are ten or a dozen of our boys now in Clerkenwell prison.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

The interference of the magistrates is one of the greatest evils that threatens the parish. I do not know how the rates, or rents, or taxes or any thing can be paid, if the parochial burthens are to be increased as they have been by the interference of the magistrates. I am confident that if the relief were left to a board of parochial officers, tradesmen, no deserving case would be neglected, and pauperism would be very materially diminished. It would also be of great advantage with respect to the despatch of parochial business, if some central office were established, where nothing else were done. It would also be of very great advantage, if paupers were allowed to be removed by the parishes without the intervention of magistrates.

Mr. Benett.—The interference of the magistrates arises from the neglect of the overseer to do his duty, in relieving the paupers who are compelled to appear before the magistrate for parochial support, in consequence of that neglect of duty. The magistrate would be much pleased to be exonerated from so painful a task if the overseer would do his duty.

The overseers and the Board, not being legal men, could not judge of the legality of settlement. But no men, I conceive, should have authority where they have an adverse interest.

If all settlements but birth settlements were abolished, it would be very severe on our parish, unless it were united to a more wealthy district.

We have frequently mechanics, who obtain very high wages during particular periods, and when work fails, immediately come upon the parish. In fact the men who obtain the highest wages are, generally speaking, the greatest drunkards, and in times when work is slack, are much worse off than other labouring men who have received less wages. I will engage to say that those who earn moderate wages put by more money than those who have earned very high wages during the summer. I formerly carried on the business of a willow-square maker, and have paid as much as four or five pounds a week to particular men for months together. I do not believe that one of these men ever saved a pound. Several of them are now in the workhouse and receiving relief, who might have provided for themselves by means of savings banks, until they get some other description of profitable labour. The sawyers are another set of men of the same description. The brick-makers are another similar class. It would be of very great advantage to parishes if relief were given to all these classes in the way of loan, and power were conferred to attach a portion of their wages for repayment.

We never visit or make inquiries at their residences, as we know it is of no use; neither do we visit the residences of the juvenile applicants for relief.

Mr. Benett.—This is certainly a gross neglect on the part of the overseer, on whose statements no magistrate can place any dependance when such inquiries are omitted.

ST. JOHN, HACKNEY.

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY Expended on Relief of the POOR.	
	In- habited.	Unin- habited.	Build- ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.		
1801	2,050	84	—	—	—	12,730	2,420	—		£.
1811	2,699	113	70	—	—	16,771	3,125	—	1776	1,725
1821	3,715	206	116	9,766	12,728	22,494	4,653	—	1785	2,376
1831	5,220	561	53	13,571	17,476	31,047	6,307	6,670	1803	5,158
									1813	12,157
									1815	11,002
									1821	13,170
									1823	10,338
									1824	10,655
									1825	10,225
									1826	10,510
									1827	12,459
									1828	10,647
									1829	12,388
									1830	12,845
									1831	12,374
									1832	14,012
AGRICULTURE.		1831.	MANUFACTURE.		1831.	All others not com- prised in the two preceding Classes.		1831.		
No. of Families chiefly employed in Agriculture -		582	No. of Families chiefly employed in Trade, &c. -		2,505	No. of Families -		3,220		
Occupiers employ- ing Labourers -		44	Males 20 Years of Age, employed in Manufacture -		112	Males 20 Years of Age, not Ser- vants, nor includ- ed in the two pre- ceding Classes -		512		
Occupiers not em- ploying Labourers		30	Ditto, employed in Retail Trade -		2,419					
Labourers employ- ed in Agriculture, not 20 Years of Age -		—	Capitalists, Bank- ers, &c. -		1,429	SERVANTS.				
			Labourers employ- ed in Labour not Agricultural -		1,236	Males 20 Years old — under 20 -		281 71		
						Females -		2,496		

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.
Pauper labour.Allegation, that inter-
ference of the
magistrates prevents
discipline amongst
the paupers.Sort of labour resorted
to.Characters of
paupers.Former means of the
paupers.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Joseph Dossett, Relieving Overseer of St. John, Hackney.

I WAS elected a trustee of the parish in Easter 1824, and I continued a trustee until the time I became a relieving overseer, which was in February last. I have been surveyor of the highways about five years, and chief constable of Hackney about seven years; so that I have had extensive means of becoming acquainted with the condition of the poor. I was superintendent of the police force until the establishment of the new police.

We have not at present adequate labour in our parish for the able-bodied labourers. At the present time we are drawing gravel with trucks by paupers on the highways. The generality of the paupers are exceedingly bad labourers, so bad that if I wanted any work done for myself I should employ a person who is not in the general habit of receiving parochial relief. Their prevalent language is, that "if you cannot find us work you must keep us without work;" and they well know that, whether they are good or bad workmen, whether they are attentive or not, you must keep them.

Cannot you enforce any system of discipline amongst them, to compel them to work as hard as the independent labourer?—No, I do not think we can; I do consider that the interference of the magistrates will prevent us. The magistrates will throw upon us the burthen of proving that the men have wilfully refused to work, and will also exercise their own discretion as to the sort of work at which the men ought to be employed. Now the proof of a pauper's wilful refusal is so difficult that I can rarely if ever attempt it; and then again, if the question comes before the magistrates, I hardly know what they would approve of. Some time ago, when we had a number of idle people crowding upon us, and we had no work on the roads or other work, I remember I employed several men to carry notes from Hackney to High Beach and Reinham in Essex, which is about 12 miles out, making about 24 miles journey. They were to carry the letter, and receive a card back; they had sixpence at starting. More frequently they would put the letter in the post than carry it, and would not apply for relief again for several weeks. At last a person refused to carry the letter, and summoned me to appear at Worship-street, where Mr. Benett, the sitting magistrate, decided that the work was not useful and profitable employment, and that I must relieve the pauper. Soon after the practice was discontinued. At another time I sent a man with a basket, weighing about 29 lbs., for him to deliver at High Beach; he was to leave it there. Instead of doing this, he left it at the police-office, Worship-street, and returned with a summons. When the case was heard before Mr. Benett, his worship directed Eagles, the officer, to get the basket weighed. When the weight was declared, Mr. Benett expressed his disapprobation at sending a man such a distance; and I was obliged to relieve the pauper. I must observe, that it is only the very worst description of paupers, the idle and vicious, that we ever send on such errands. On one other occasion a woman of the name of Brooks and her child were in the workhouse; the husband being out of work, applied for relief; I offered to find him work on the road to sweep the footpaths, for the accommodation of the public and the rate-payers. He refused to work; I refused him relief, and he brought me a summons. This person, though a troublesome pauper, had, it was stated, been a writer in Doctors' Commons. Mr. Benett decided that that was not suitable employment, and that I must find him "suitable employment," or relieve him. After that he remained for some time chargeable to us in idleness, we being unable to find him "suitable employment."

Mr. Benett.—I am still of opinion that no man of good character, though poor, should be put to degrading or unprofitable work, or work without any useful object; and perhaps the man who had seen better days might not have been in a fit state to do common labourer's work, such as sweeping the crossings.

The employment of paupers on useless work, or work without an object, such as sending them 24 miles with a blank piece of paper or a basket of stones alluded to by Mr. Dossett, I think degrading, and calculated to debase the mind without being of service to the parish.

To give a conception of the characters we are compelled to relieve, I might state that out of eighty persons whom I was compelled to relieve, I do not think there are more than ten whom I would trust on my premises where there are trifling articles lying about, as I am certain they would be pilfered. Probably we have a hundred of such characters upon the parish.

Have you, amongst the persons whom you are compelled to maintain, a gardener who was once employed by Mr. Heritage?—Yes, we have; it is a man named Thomas Kenny, and a very worthless character he is.

In my opinion the decision of the parish officers might without injury be made final on all applications for relief.

Amongst the paupers are many brick-makers, who, during the summer, earn good wages, sufficient to lay by enough to keep them creditably during the winter. A moulder earns in summer time about 50 s. a week, his wife about 15 s., and if there is a boy of fourteen or fifteen years of age, he would earn about 12 s. a week; if the boy is under that age, or about ten years of age, he might earn about 6 s. a week. I have been told of families getting as much as 5 l. per week during the brick-making season, who nevertheless have come upon the parish with the rest at the end of the season. During the season they live upon the best things that can be had.

I think it would be beneficial if we had the power of ordering a portion of the wages got in summer to be stopped as repayment for the expenditure of the parish upon them during the winter.—[If this could be done voluntarily, in the same manner as friendly societies are established, I think it would be very beneficial, but it must be voluntary, not compulsory.

W. B.]

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

Relief given in kind.

Such is the comfortable state of our workhouse, that we have great difficulty in keeping people out of it. We have continual applications from labouring men and their wives and families to come into our workhouse. When they come into it, they rarely wish to leave. I believe that they are better boarded, lodged and clothed than many people out of the workhouse. The paupers (though clothed as paupers) are better clothed than many of our rate-payers, and they are also better fed. Their residences are much cleaner and their lodging more comfortable. I do pride myself on the cleanliness and order of our workhouse.

In our parish we give relief in kind; we give bread to casual poor in seven cases out of eight; and we find the practice very beneficial. We give away nearly a ton and a half a week, which constitutes about one-half of the casual relief. The effect is, to prevent much drunkenness, and to make more men carry the relief home to their families.—[I recommended this plan to the parish of Hackney myself, but I found that they did not give a sufficiency, which made me repent my recommendation: still it is a good plan if liberally adopted. W. B.]

But is not much of it sold?—It is only occasionally that we detect them selling bread, which is done for liquor.

In this case, then, the man obtains much less liquor than would have been got by him if you had given him money?—Yes; I have known them sell the eightpenny loaf for fourpence, so that the man would thus have got four-pennyworth of gin instead of eight-pennyworth.

ST. MATTHEW, BETHNAL GREEN.

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY	
	Inhabited.	Uninhabited.	Building.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.	Expended on Relief of the POOR.	
1801	3,586	234	—	—	—	22,310	5,630	—		£.
1811	5,715	236	168	—	—	33,619	7,990	—	1776	2,825
1821	8,095	292	200	22,253	23,423	45,676	10,701	—	1785	2,688
1831	9,877	1,169	70	29,668	32,350	62,018	14,241	15,511	1803	3,484
AGRICULTURE.		1831.	MANUFACTURE.		1831.	All others not comprised in the two preceding Classes.		1831.	1815	5,427
No. of Families chiefly employed in Agriculture -		50	No. of Families chiefly employed in Trade, &c. -		11,962	No. of Families -		2,229	1821	8,439
Occupiers employing Labourers -		7	Males 20 Years of Age, employed in Manufacture -		5,651	Males 20 Years of Age, not Servants, nor included in the two preceding Classes -		611	1823	9,210
		—	Ditto, employed in Retail Trade -		5,864				1824	9,085
		—	Capitalists, Bankers, &c. -		564	SERVANTS.			1825	10,174
		—	Labourers employed in Labour not Agricultural -		2,723	Males 20 Years old under 20 -		27	1826	9,023
		—				Females -		164	1827	14,246
		—							1828	15,766
		—							1829	17,102
		—							1830	15,766
		—							1831	17,801
		—							1832	22,428

EXAMINATIONS of Mr. John Newman Hooker, Shoemaker, Bethnal Green Road, and Mr. James Bunn, Wholesale Shoemaker, 61, Wilson-street, Hackney-road.

Mr. Hooker.]—I WAS in office as overseer of the poor of the parish of Bethnal Green during the last year. I have been in office as overseer of the poor of Bethnal Green during the last nine months.

In this parish there are four overseers, chosen annually by all the rate-payers. Each of these overseers has one of the four divisions of the parishes, in which it is his duty to pay the poor of that division. When an application is made for relief, the applicant is sent in the first instance to the vestry clerk, to ascertain whether he belongs to the parish. If he does, temporary relief is given to him until one of the two beadles can make inquiry into the case. In general the inquiry into the case is confined to an examination of the applicant himself, and this is done by the beadle at the house of the applicant. Where the latter resides in the parish, inquiry as to his circumstances is sometimes made of his master. The greater proportion of our out-door paupers are silk-weavers, who receive an allowance from the parish in aid of their wages. At present the larger proportion of them receive no more than 7 s. or 8 s. a week; some of them get as much as 10 s., or 12 s. or 14 s. a week; and to those of them who have large families we give relief. To a single man we give no relief whatever if he has got work. To a married man who has such low wages, 10 d. or 1 s. a day, we give; if he has a wife and one child, or two children, we give 2 s. 6 d.; if three, four or five children, we give 5 s. There is no fixed scale, and each overseer

Mode of administering relief to the paupers of this parish.

Allowance in aid of wages, how given.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

Characters of rate
receivers.

Magistrates' allow-
ance to people of bad
character.

No work for the
women.

Characters of out-
door paupers.

Instances of their
behaviour.

Condition of the rate-
payers, from the pres-
sure of the rates.

seer gives relief according to his discretion. There are about three vestries held each quarter. There is a house committee elected by the vestry. This committee sits weekly; revises the accounts of the overseer, and orders whatever sums of money are wanted for the ensuing week.

The relief given by the overseer (when it is permanent) must have the sanction of the Board.

There are now about one hundred and fifty young able-bodied people of bad character, thieves and prostitutes, who receive relief from the parish. When relief is not given to them immediately when they apply, they proceed to Worship-street and obtain summonses. They will go frequently when they have had relief, and we have reason to believe they have stated that they have had no relief whatever. Sixpence a day is the sum generally ordered by the magistrates to people of bad character.—[*I never order more to people of good character. W. B.*]—About three weeks ago about twenty men demanded 8d. a day. These were men who were not working at the time, and who would do any thing rather than work. They summoned me before the magistrates, who dismissed their complaint; we had tasked them to break three bushels of stone, as a condition of their receiving the 6d. We have known some of them break as much as six or seven bushels a day. The men, when they have broken their three bushels of stone, can go out and get other work, which some of them do; this is a recent regulation. There is no work for the women; about 20 or 30 are regular prostitutes. The house is now full of inmates. Sometimes persons of this character are taken into the house. When they are taken into the workhouse, their course of conduct is to make themselves as disagreeable as possible, and annoy the old people, and get turned out. In general they succeed in compelling us to relieve them out of doors.

It is quite common for the officers from the police offices to come to our parish to inquire for bad characters, against whom charges are made. The police officers are well acquainted with their characters. It is the worst characters who generally raise tumults. It has become a common practice amongst them to besiege the house of an overseer who has a shop, and prevent his customers obtaining access, and continue threatening and using bad language, until they obtain relief. My wife has, in my absence, given money to them under the influence of fear. About two months ago my windows were broken by some of the prostitutes, and I have been compelled to apply to the police for personal protection from them. I know it to be a common thing for them to extort money from other overseers by these means. The police render us very little assistance.

Mr. Hooker.]—On many occasions I have given them money to get rid of annoyance, and I have been compelled to apply to the police for aid. When I have applied to the police to remove them from the door, the police have told me they have no power to remove them. Sometimes they have broken my windows when relief has not immediately been given to them. To give an idea of their behaviour, I may mention one instance. When I was in office, a girl came to my shop at between seven and eight in the morning, and asked the boy where I was. He told her I was not down yet. "Then," said she, with an oath, "I'll soon fetch him down." She took off her shoe, and broke one of the panes of glass inside the shop. This did bring me down. She then told me she had broken my windows inside, as she did not think she should get so much (imprisonment) for breaking my windows inside as she had got for breaking Shenton's windows. She had broken Mr. Shenton's windows on the outside. The magistrate imprisoned her for an extent of time corresponding to the value of the pane of glass she had broken. I think the imprisonment was at the rate of a day for each 6d. in value. The value of the pane of glass she broke in my shop was, I think, 3s. 6d., and she was imprisoned seven days for it. The value of the outside pane of glass broken at Mr. Shenton's was greater, and caused her imprisonment to be longer than was probably convenient to her. Mr. Shenton was the overseer for the year before. She had previously broken his and other overseers' windows, and had been imprisoned for it. Sending them to Bridewell does them no good whatever.

Mr. Bunn.]—They repeatedly tell me, that by being sent to Bridewell they are sure of getting plenty of food, and shall be sent out with clothes. I do not know what clothes are given to them there, but I have frequently seen them better dressed when they came out of prison than they were when they were sent in. They frequently dare me to send them to bridewell. There is no difference between the girls and the men, except that of the two the girls are the worst.

There are now numbers of houses empty in our parish; the respectable people are leaving the parish on account of the pressure of the rates. That pressure must increase, unless some employment is found for the poor. We are now about 15,000*l.* in debt. The overseers are now under apprehension of being arrested for the county and the police rates.

Mr. Bunn.]—I do not think we could realize one penny more than a fifteen-penny rate. A higher rate was proposed to the vestry, but they said it was impossible to collect it. The contractors declare that they will not contract any more for the parish. We owe 4,000*l.* to the mealmen for flour to make bread; we owe 1,000*l.* to the cheesemonger. They and the other tradesmen who have supplied the parish, declare that they can supply us no longer. There is at present hardly one shopkeeper out of five who can pay his rates. The rents of the smaller houses have been reduced on account of the burthens of the rates. The rents of the larger shops must soon be reduced, if something is not done for us, or unless trade revives. Nearly two-thirds of the tenements in our parish are now owned by persons who compound for the rates, and who let them out in weekly and monthly rates. They threatened, that if we increased the rates, they "would throw up the compound," and leave us to get the rates how we could. If they did throw up the compound, the parish would be sunk deeper in ruin, as we should never be able to collect the rates.

THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE POOR LAWS.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

Mr. *Hooker.*—My trade is declining; so is the trade of my neighbours. From year to year my returns are less; so are theirs; and respectable people are leaving the place, which makes it still worse.

Are there any persons in the parish weavers, who receive no higher wages than the weavers receiving relief from you, and who yet live on those wages alone without any additional aid?—[Mr. *Bunn.*—Numbers.

Who live on the same wages as the others, and yet obtain no relief?—Yes, they have a spirit above coming on the parish.

How long do you think that spirit will resist the opportunity of getting half a crown or four or five shillings a week?—I really do not know; they hold out very strongly.

The condition of your parish being such as you describe, sunk deep in debt, if not absolutely bankrupt; houses deserted in consequence of the pressure of the rates; the pressure increasing; rents declining, and ruin impending; what remedies have presented themselves to the minds of those who govern the parish; what new courses are they prepared to take?—I do not know; I have not heard of any thing; we cannot do any thing; we must depend on Providence; I do not see what is to save us from ruin, if Government does not do something for us.

What do you expect the Government to do?—I do not know, unless they can provide profitable labour for the parish.

EXAMINATION of Mr. *Thomas Williams*, formerly Overseer; Mr. *Bunn*, Acting Overseer; Mr. *John Davis*, Beadle; Mr. *Robert Entwistle*, Master of the Workhouse.

Mr. *Bunn.*—I have lived in the parish between 20 and 30 years. Yesterday 4,144 individuals were relieved at the house, and of these, I believe that five out of six were weavers, or connected with the weaving trade. We believe that there is now between 6,000 and 7,000 relieved in the course of the week, and amongst them the weavers have the same proportion. We paid 67*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.* yesterday, in sums from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*, which would average about 3½*d.* per head.

To Mr. *Davis.*—Are there any weavers in the parish who do not receive parochial relief?—Yes, there are, but I do not know how many; I hope the greater proportion of weavers are not receiving relief.

Weavers in the parish who live on their wages, without relief in aid of wages.

Do you not know instances where the weavers who do not receive relief have yet as large families and as low wages as those who do?—Certainly; but those who keep from the parish have, perhaps, two or three looms and are kept in constant employment.

But are you sure, from your own knowledge, that of those who keep from the parish there are none whose wages are not better than the wages of those who come on the parish?—Yes, there are some; but I do not believe that they subsist entirely on their wages: I have no doubt that they have assistance from other sources.

What alteration has there been in the population of the parish with relation to the poor?—We have had great numbers of weavers from the parish of Christchurch, Spitalfields; we have also had weavers from Sudbury, Manchester, Macclesfield, from Somersetshire, and other parts of the country. I think more than one-third have come into the parish by emigration. The chief inducement to come into our parish from other London parishes was the cheapness of the houses, which are smaller in Bethnal Green, and from there being better light there, and more freedom from smoke. The chief decline of wages took place about eight years ago, at the time when the price-book, or fixed scale of wages, was done away with. Wages immediately after fell, in consequence of the excessive competition between masters and men as well. This was the chief cause of distress. In consequence of the low wages, the weavers began to embezzle the silk; the masters, who had before been accustomed to lend money on the work as it went on, now refused to pay the wages until the whole work was completed. The men could not subsist without wages until the completion of the work, which took a fortnight, three weeks, or a month, according to the length of the cane. It is very rare that any one can get his work out in less than a fortnight. At this time they began to come upon our parish by hundreds, and we were compelled to give them money from the poor's rates in aid of their wages. In the year 1826, we had only one board day in the week, commencing at three o'clock and finishing at five; now we have two boards in one day, and a third on another day, and they are in operation from ten o'clock in the morning until seven or eight in the evening in paying the various applicants.

Account of the pauperism prevalent amongst the silk weavers.

At the time the price-book was about to be abolished the parish strenuously opposed the Bill, and aided the weavers by subscriptions or otherwise to support their opposition; when the price-book was abolished was there much sympathy for the weavers manifested by the parish officers?—[Mr. *Davis.*—Very considerable; they were all directly or indirectly interested in the prosperity of the weavers. One officer was the owner of a number of houses; another was a dealer in silk; another was a smith living in the parish, and the fourth was a cheesemonger, having some houses in the parish, and they were of course liberal to the poor weavers, whom they knew to be distressed in consequence of the reduction of prices.

Parish officers directly or indirectly interested in relieving the weavers.

The weavers being much distressed at the time of the change, did the then parish officers take care that their wages were not further reduced?—As far as their means would go, the parish officers certainly did; but in consequence of the continually increasing numbers of the applications, a reduction of the allowances became absolutely necessary.

How soon did this reduction take place?—At the end of the second year, or the beginning of the third year, after the abolition of the price-book. The wages, as I have stated, increased the first year after the price-book was done away with, but fell considerably the second year; in the second year, the parish gave very full relief; but the numbers increased

Appendix A.)

Reports.

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so enormously, that during the third year the reduction of the allowances in aid of wages became necessary.

Were the applicants at that time visited?—Yes; but there was nothing of the visiting then which there is now: no comparison.

Were there any thoughts at that time entertained of refusing out-door relief, and taking into the workhouse all who applied?—None whatever; I never heard of such an idea being entertained by the parish officers. If any such idea had been entertained I think I must have heard of it. The general effort was to keep as many out of the house as we could. We had then many more prosperous rate-payers than we have now, and it was conceived that the distress was but temporary.

Was the relief at that time more ample than it is now in most individual cases of out-door relief?—Yes, it was much more liberal; I think they would give then about one-third more in each case than they do now.

What was the progress of the weavers' wages after the abolition of the price-book?—The next year it increased 1*d.* a yard in most works, being 1*s.* for the same work for which 6*d.* is now paid.

But was not that an improvement on the prices of the book?—Yes, it was; but it began to sink very rapidly. The sinking was accelerated by the opening of the foreign market.

Was the number of those who were ready to take work at lower than the regular prices, considerable at the time of the abolition of the price-book?—Not considerable compared with what it is at present. The numbers have increased much faster than work for them. It is our great misfortune that, notwithstanding the severe distress of the times, they go on breeding as fast as ever.

Can you, of your own knowledge, speak to the condition of the weavers who are not receiving parochial relief? what are your means of knowing the operations of the silk trade?—I was myself a weaver during the whole of my life, except about eight years that I was at sea. I am connected with weavers, and know the facts, from extensive communications with masters as well as with the men, in the course of nine years' inquiries.

Were the wages and parochial relief, taken together, at the time you mention, as high as any wages they could get by silk-weaving at any other places; Norwich, Manchester or Macclesfield?—I firmly believe that the weavers could not better themselves anywhere else; if they could, we should not have had so many return as returned at that time, after having tried elsewhere. Great numbers went and very few staid, unless they got situations as overlookers or foremen. We have had several of the better description of weavers return. Two men, named Saggars and Thompson, journeymen weavers, went to Oakingham; Saggars went as foreman, but afterwards became master, and has returned, and is now carrying on business in town; Thompson has also returned, and is carrying on business in town.

It is stated, that the amount of raw silk imported is double what it was formerly: it is to be presumed that it is worked up somewhere?—[Mr. Bunn.]—At Manchester and Macclesfield, and other places, the amount of silk works have greatly increased. It is understood in Spitalfields, that at Manchester and other towns they manufacture silk goods in the factories, where they can work them up cheaper. In Spitalfields the weavers must pay higher rents for the accommodation of their rooms. Where the goods are manufactured at a manufactory, the weaver can make shift with one room for his family and himself, if the family is not very numerous. The master has also the work under his own custody on the premises, and is not exposed to so much loss from depredation, and can pay the wages as the work proceeds. I cannot speak from my own knowledge, but I believe that they do at Manchester and those places make advances of wages. I believe the manufacturers also take long measure.

Have the manufacturers in Bethnal Green altered the system of giving out-door employment?—They have adopted the practice of winding the silk in manufactories; but they have made no alteration in the system of weaving; I do not know one factory for weaving silk near London.—[Mr. Bunn.]—I believe that the silk weaving will all be taken away from London. They get their work made so much cheaper in the country. Several of the master manufacturers have told me that they cannot compete with the country manufacturers; that our business must go, they manufacture the goods so much more cheaply in the country.

Have numbers of workmen gone from Bethnal Green?—Yes, numbers have gone.

And staid away?—Yes.

Have any come back?—Many have not been able to get work there any more than here.—[Mr. Davis.]—I believe that the greater number who have gone away are mere vagabonds, generally speaking, who have done something wrong, such as leaving their families with the parish, and who cannot live respectably in London.

Why do the respectable weavers return to London?—I think the chief cause is that they do not get such wages as they do here. A respectable man told me that he could not get such good wages or keep his family so well there as he could here.

Is this man receiving parochial relief?—O no; and never did.

Have you had instances of persons who when they applied for relief and have been told they would be sent home, refused to go?—We have had such instances.

And have you seen the same parties continue residents in your parish?—Yes, but now numbers beg to be removed.—[Mr. Bunn.]—I had some instances of that sort occur to me very recently.

Have you had constant work for the poor able-bodied paupers in your parish?—[Mr. Davis.]—Not until about three years ago when we got some stone-breaking.

Was that universally or partially applied to the able-bodied?—Only partially; to the idle and

and dissolute who we thought would always hang upon the parish, and never get work of any sort if they could help it. The overseers never think of sending to stone-breaking any man who had been respectable, and who they think could get work at his own business.

Have you employed them as scavengers?—Not constantly; only occasionally when there has been no stone-breaking.—[Mr. Bunn.]—We are nearly out of stone-breaking, and I think, I should employ some of the men as scavengers; but the real fact is, we have not money to buy the brooms with to set them at work.

Have you ever tried relief in kind in your parish?—Never; it has always been in money.

Can you say whether any of this money is spent in gin?—[Mr. Bunn.]—Every one will tell you, the very boys in the street will tell you of it. One publican told me that he received 2*l.* more for gin on our Board-day than other days.

Then you have never given relief in kind in the parish?—[Mr. Bunn.]—Never.

Do you think that such a mode of relief would be serviceable?—I think if food instead of money were given, numbers who now come for the money would never come for their food. I proposed that soup and bread and potatoes instead of money should be given, but the proposal was not supported.

On what ground was it objected to?—No reasons whatever were offered. The only answer was, an assertion that it would not do, and it was said that if it were carried into execution I should have my house painted with soup. I also proposed that a number of idle boys in the house should be set to work, and offered to superintend them gratuitously for one twelvemonth; but the offer was not accepted, on the ground that we had not the means, though I am confident that credit might have been got to accomplish it.

What number of public-houses and gin-shops are there in your parish?—[Mr. Davis.]—There are 117 regular public-houses, and there are about 100 beer-shops.

Have the number of such houses increased in your parish?—There were none licensed last year in our parish; but there were a great number of applications for licences to new houses.

Have the pawnbrokers increased in your neighbourhood?—Wonderfully, and so have the brokers.

What proportion of bad characters have you in the parish?—[Mr. Bunn.]—I can speak with certainty to 92, but I have no doubt that there are more; young men receiving relief from the parish, who are too many of them thieves; the whole of them are the most desperate characters. Besides these there are almost 50 low prostitutes on the parish. Besides these there are in the house a number of bad characters, but not so many as there are out.

*Character of a portion
of the rate receivers.*

To what do you attribute these latter burthens?—[Mr. Bunn.]—Chiefly to the interference of the magistrates as to the mode of relief, and forcing us to relieve such people without reference to their characters.—[Mr. Davis.]—We know a person's character, and that he is unworthy attention or relief; but the magistrate will not hear any thing said of his character in answer to the application.—[*It is not just that people of bad character should therefore starve. W.B.*]

Do you think the decision of the vestry might be made final?—I think it might, especially if the decision were held over until the next day, or in such form as would insure its being done deliberately and coolly. Sometimes gentlemen are irritated by the impositions they meet with, and might decide harshly if they decided at once; but if they were to decide on the day following the application, I think the interference of the magistrates might be usefully removed. Not having had any experience of the removal of the interference of the magistrates I cannot speak as to how far the causes of irritation in the minds of the parish officers would be prevented if their decision were made final. I think that if such an alteration could be made there should be a permanent overseer appointed to prevent the annual overseers deciding in ignorance.

What is the condition of the property in your parish in consequence of these burthens?—[Mr. Bunn.]—I believe there are now about 500 houses unoccupied. There are parts of whole streets where the leaseholders would be glad to give up the houses, some of them six-roomed houses, if they could get rid of them. In fact, such property is rapidly becoming absorbed. The landlords are complaining bitterly that the number of those who pay rents is very rapidly diminishing.

Effects on property.

Have you had the former governors of the parish, many of the landlords of the smaller tenements?—[Mr. Bunn.]—Many of them; you may say a great proportion of them. What has been done by the parish officers before me I cannot say, but recommendations have been made to us in our time by landlords to relieve their tenants, but we would not attend to them.

The recommendations were made, of course, in the expectation that they would be attended to?—Yes, but they were not attended to; we have set our faces against such recommendations.

Who are the chief landlords in the parish?—Mr. Merceron, Mr. Ridge, and Mr. Butler.

Have they been guardians of the poor?—Yes, Mr. Merceron was for very many years one of the most active officers in the parish. He was looked up to as the chief man in the parish. Mr. Ridge also served for many years; Mr. Butler was a governor, but he was not so busy as Mr. Merceron.

Do you or any of the overseers pay the poor by tickets?—[Mr. Bunn.]—The overseers do not pay by ticket, but pay money out of their own pockets, which they charge to the parish, and account for the money at the end of the quarter. My last weekly account of the casual relief for one division was 27*l.* odd. This was paid away in shillings and sixpences. It is paid in advance for the quarter, and we receive no interest for the outlay.

Has this been the usual course of proceeding for years past?—I believe it is; there has been no alteration.

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Is this expenditure discretionary with the annual overseer?—Yes, the casual relief is.

Does he frequently sit alone, or is he assisted by other parish officers?—On Thursdays and Saturdays we sit alone, unless some governor by chance drops in in the course of the day, but generally we sit alone.

And are not regularly assisted by any permanent officers?—No, we are not assisted by any one.

Do you not find that you are frequently imposed upon?—In spite of all our annual officers can do, we are frequently imposed upon. There were 400 new faces for me to pay the first night I sat. I had no one to assist me, or to inform me, and I gave money away on the mere statements made to me. I am confident that I paid some of the people twice over that night. Generally speaking, we are liable to imposition of people receiving relief as being out of work who are in work, numbers of women pretending that their husbands have deserted them.

Have you had overseers serving more than one year?—[Mr. Davis.]—Yes; since I have been in office two have served three years, and one two years.

Have you had others who have been desirous of serving?—[Mr. Davis.]—Those who had served were known to be desirous of serving again.

What reason did they allege for being desirous of serving again?—I do not know.—[Mr. Bunn.]—For my own part I would have gladly paid to have been excused; I have offered 60*l.* to be excused from serving after I was in office. I also offered to put down 50*l.* as a subscription to extricate the parish from its difficulties, but not a soul followed my example. I was offered by my predecessors when I entered into office to have my duties performed for me, but this offer I declined, as I must have been responsible for all monies.

Can you judge or state what you suppose to have been the object of the parties in again serving so burthensome an office?—I know their object, but that I must, if you please, decline stating.

Have there been any case of malversation in your parish?—Never, that I am aware of.

Nor any suspicions or rumours of malversation prevalent in the parish?—There have been such rumours.

Have there been any grounds for such rumours?—I do not know of my own knowledge, and cannot speak to them.

Are you ready to swear that you know of no grounds?—All that I can say is, that the expenditure this year is less than it was last year; I cannot say how that was.—[Mr. Davis.]—I beg to say in behalf of the three gentlemen first mentioned, that they went out of office with the greatest credit in the parish at whose request it was they served. Two of them, it was stated, stopped in as friends of Mr. Brutton, the vestry clerk, there being a strong contest for that office. Another staid in, principally, as I understand, to serve the cause of the weavers in the matter of the price book.

But in a parish like yours, where there are a number of small tradesmen whose credit is not very good, and where large sums pass through the hands of parish officers, with considerable opportunities for malversation on the part of any one who has the inclination, is not the parish exposed to very considerable danger unless a prudent choice be made?—[Mr. Bunn.]—Certainly; I have heard such persons boast, that if they were in office they would take care of themselves.

Are many of the silk masters employing the weavers in your parish very wealthy?—There are only two wealthy masters in our parish who reside in it; but many of the masters who reside elsewhere are very wealthy men.

Have they ever subscribed for the relief of the distress in your neighbourhood?—[Mr. Davis.]—I never remember hearing of subscriptions from any others than the two who reside with us.

On the following day Mr. Bunn came and stated:—"I wish to alter a portion of my testimony with relation to the former overseers. I believe that the rumours respecting them were groundless, and such rumours as always go forth when overseers have concluded their services."

I re-examined the Witness at some length on this point, and (to my mind) the subsequent modification in no way altered the effect of his previous testimony.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Masterman.

I WAS born in Bethnal Green parish, and lived there within the last two years. I served the office of headborough. In 1816, 1817 and 1818 I was in office as churchwarden and overseer. I have seen no alteration in the general parochial management since that time, and there were then great opportunities of mismanagement as well as peculation.

Landlords of the smaller tenants made themselves dispensers of relief.

Landlords rated their own houses very low. Landlords, in adjudicating relief at the Board, have advocated the claims of their own tenants.

The system of expenditure was bad, in the favouritism exercised as to the parties to whom relief was given. Many of the landlords of the smaller tenements have always mustered their friends on the days of election, to get them appointed governors or guardians of the poor. In the first place, they took care in making the rates that their own houses should be rated very low. I complained of it when I was in office. When parties came to be relieved, who were tenants of the governors who sat at the Board, the governors have given testimony to their meritorious characters, and urged that they might have relief. I have been present when the landlords, and the other guardians have proposed that 1*s.* 6*d.* should be given, would say, "Oh, he is a very good man, give him 3*s.*" and the 3*s.* has been awarded. The working of this system would naturally be, that when one man's tenants

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tenants were thus favoured, he would favour the tenants of the others in turn when they came to demand relief. Another consequence is, that the landlord or his collector, when they collect the rent, are well aware that the tenant has had money which will pay it.

From the want of proper care in the appointment of persons as collectors of the poor rates, unworthy persons have been appointed; and from bad management large sums of money have been allowed to remain in their hands which ought not to have been, and the defaulters have been frequent. There have been two defaulters very recently.

Another source of mismanagement was the workhouse. This was in the supply of goods and the consumption. The workhouse keepers had no sufficient interest in the reduction of the expenditure. There was scarcely any work found for the able-bodied paupers. In 1823, having seen the superior management of the houses under the direction of Mr. Charles Mott, I requested him to inspect the workhouse, which he did. He sent in a letter, stating that 1,500*l.* per annum might be saved, and the poor better kept. He undertook to make this saving. I requested that the letter might be entered on the minutes. Whether it was or not I cannot say, but I know that no attention was paid to it. The house has always been badly kept.

Was it the loss of patronage, the influence in the supply of goods, which prevented the attention to this saving?—I thought so at the time; I could account for it in no other way.

Have you had any reason to believe that it was a common practice for persons serving the parochial offices to supply goods themselves through connexions or otherwise?—I cannot say that I know of an instance myself, though some prosecutions took place which were said to have been compromised.

Is it not notorious, as a general practice, that parties have had an interest or, as it is termed, a feeling in the supply of goods directly or indirectly?—It is believed in the parish that this is very frequently done indirectly. Indeed, when I was overseer, I gave my own brother the building of an oven at the workhouse. I did it because it was the practice.

Have you not seen influence used in giving contracts?—Yes, I know an instance where a shoemaker had not been paid for his contract, and then it was said, "Oh, we cannot pay him now, but we must let him have the contract for another quarter." The consequence was, more was paid for the goods than they could have been contracted for elsewhere.

Was the payment in the first instance not made as you consider in consequence of mismanagement?—I think it was in consequence of mismanagement they got into arrears with other articles.

What other opportunities has the system afforded for considerable malversation?—The payment of the casual poor and the out-door relief affords very great opportunities for fraud on the parts of the overseers as well as the paupers, but I cannot say that I know of any instances. I suggested the payment by tickets, but the suggestion was not adopted.

What is the popular opinion on this subject?—That to be an overseer, and take care of the poor is a very good thing.

On what grounds has that opinion been founded?—They have seen a person's condition greatly improve after having served the office of overseer; they have seen this take place without seeing any increase in his business, and without having heard or known of any money having been left to him; having, in short, no ostensible reason except that he has been in office.

Is the remark common?—Yes, it is.

What amendments for this state of things have you to suggest?—The chief amendment is, that local interests should be set aside by some general management under the control of the legislature.

Peculations of collectors.
Peculations in the supply of goods for the workhouse.

A tender of a saving of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, and better keep of the pauper rejected.

Loss of patronage, and the means of peculation the only assignable reason.

Goods supplied, and jobs executed, by parish officers.

Facilities for peculation in the payment of casual poor.

The second of the following Reports from the medical officers, show in what a state the paupers and the inmates of the workhouse were allowed to remain after the most impressive notice had been given of the approach of a pestilence to the metropolis. This disgraceful and dangerous state of the workhouse was made the ground of a successful application for a grant of money to aid the parish in the emergency.

Copy of a LETTER addressed to the Committee of the Parish of *St. Matthew, Bethnal Green*.

"GENTLEMEN,

"25 October 1831.

"I CONSIDER it my duty to call your immediate attention to the crowded state of the workhouse.

"In No. 8 there are 99 boys and only 14 beds, which will only hold six each; and the nurse informs me, that last night 16 were actually obliged to sleep on the floor.

"In Nos. 10 & 12 the women and children lie six in a bed, and, from their being in the wards night and day, the air becomes so impure that the children are pining away, and upon the appearance of the measles, whooping-cough, or other disease, no medical treatment will prevent their fatal effects.

"I beg also to mention the rubbish in the back yard as likely to produce mischief when the wet weather sets in, for the decomposed vegetable and animal matter contained therein is often a source of infection, and will probably be more pernicious, as the fever is still very prevalent in the parish.

"I am, Gentlemen, your's respectfully,

(A true Copy.) "G. E. Sargeant."

"Fred^k Ager."

Appendix (A.)

WEEKLY State of the POOR belonging to the House, to Tuesday 7th February 1832.

Reports.	WARD.	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Beds.	TOTAL.	
E. Chadwick, Esq.	1	-	44	-	-	19	44	
	2	-	23	-	4	16	27	
	3	-	58	-	-	18	58	{ Sick Ward, { Men - 298 6 fever cases { Women 421 Boys - 176 Girls - 166
THE WORSHIP-STREET DISTRICT.	4	48	-	-	-	17	48	In the House - - 1,061
	5	86	-	-	-	28	86	
	6	21	-	-	-	13	21	Sick Ward, 8 fever cases. At purse - - 49 Insane - - 13
	7	59	-	1	-	16	60	
	8	5	-	120	-	22	125	
	9	50	-	13	-	20	63	
	10	-	17	4	9	9	30	Sick with fever in this Ward, 22; Mangling Room - - -
	11	-	43	-	1	15	44	
	12	-	16	10	12	10	38	Increase since last Tuesday - - 29
	13	-	21	-	-	10	21	
	14	-	20	-	-	10	20	
	15	-	26	-	4	10	30	
	16	-	28	-	4	11	32	
	17	-	16	7	5	10	28	
	18	-	42	-	-	12	42	
	19	-	24	-	-	7	24	
	20	-	14	19	125	27	153	Sick with fever in this Ward, 24.
	21	8	9	-	-	9	17	
	22	5	5	-	-	5	10	
	23	-	14	-	2	8	16	
	24	16	1	2	-	14	19	
		298	421	176	166	337	1,061	Total Fever Cases.

(A true Copy.)

G. E. Sargeant.

"SIR,

"London, 6 February 1832.

"IN conformity to your directions, we have the honour to report that we have inspected the workhouse at Bethnal Green yesterday, and conversed with the overseers of the parish respecting its condition.

"We have, in the first place, to state, that the enormous pile of cinders, rubbish, &c. in the back yard of the building still remains in the same state as when the workhouse was inspected some weeks before, but that measures are in progress for its removal.

"With respect to the internal of the workhouse, we have to inform the Board that it is at present unusually and alarmingly crowded, containing 1,044 inmates, male and female, the average population being about 100 less, a number still disproportionate to the extent of the house and the accommodation which it affords. The healthy paupers are lying three, four and five in one bed; from 60 to 80 in one narrow, low apartment, the windows all closed, the low rooms crossed with lines supporting their dirty clothes, interrupting the little remaining air, and the whole in a state of great filth, emitting a most intolerable odour. We can, however, state that two or three of the wards were cleaner and in a better state of ventilation.

"We have also to report, that besides the ordinary diseases prevalent in this and similar asylums, there is a great and unusual number of cases of fever at present under treatment. In one ward, exclusively occupied by fever patients, about 30 feet long by 14 broad and about 11 high, containing nine beds, there were 14 adult females and seven children in various stages of disease, and lying one, two, three or four in one bed. When we entered the room, we found every aperture but the fire-place closed, and the smell and heat completely intolerable. In a second sick female ward we found four cases of fever amongst the other patients; the ventilation was rather better, the apartment cleaner and less densely crowded. In a third ward, occupied by boys and men in fever, we found 22 individuals occupying six beds, five in some beds. There were three grown boys, labouring under severe symptoms of fever, in one bed. The filth of bed linen, floors, &c. here was very great, the windows closely shut up, and the heat and stench excessive. The long ward immediately over this is allotted to healthy paupers. We found it crowded to excess, and the beds occupied by three, four and five individuals. In the furthest corner of the room we detected a man, named *Headlam*, who had been three days labouring under violent fever. He had, according to his own statement, and those of other inmates of the ward, received no medical assistance whatever. His bed was shared by three men; eight men were sitting round it when we entered, and two were dining with their plates on his bed. The state of crowding and filth in this ward was very great.

"In the female lying-in ward we found 15 persons, women, infants and children, to whom were allotted 10 beds. One woman was in the last stage of small-pox, which disease she had been allowed to go through in this ward. A child was recovered from measles, and we were informed that some cases of typhus had taken place. The deaths during the month of January, from the 1st to 31st inclusive) have been 50. Those in the same month for the preceding year (population of the house then 950, were only 23.

"We have further to express our regret, that owing to the absence of the medical officer of the workhouse during our inspection, we are unable to report on the symptoms, rate of mortality, origin or mode of propagation of fever in the establishment, the parochial officers being unable to give us any precise information on these particulars; neither are they enabled to present any information as to the state

Condition of the
workhouse at the time
of the approach of the
cholera.

state of health of the parish, but they have made arrangements with the two medical attendants of the parish, who have promised to report them to the Central Board.

"We have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servants,

(A true Copy.)

"G. E. Sargeant,

"The Chairman of the Central Board of Health."

(Signed)

"John Anderson, M. D. Surgeon R. N.

"W. B. O'Shaughnessy, M. D."

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

CHRIST CHURCH, SPITALFIELDS, (MIDDLESEX.)

THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -		15,091	16,200	18,650	17,949

Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
	£. 5,322	£. 8,105	£. , 695	£. 4,285	£. 7,705	£. 4,671

EXAMINATION of Mr. Richard Gregory, Treasurer of the Paving Rate, and also of the Poor's Rate of the Parish of *Christchurch, Spitalfields*.

I WAS born in the parish, and have been about twelve years treasurer; I was about five years previously in office as chief of the special constables. I have also been a commissioner of the Court of Requests ten years, and during the whole time I have been in business I have employed a number of labourers; so that altogether I have had the means of becoming well acquainted with the condition of the poor and with parochial management in our district.

There is a mistake about Spitalfields as to the nature of the occupations of the inhabitants. There are now very few weavers in Spitalfields comparatively to what there were. The larger proportion of them have, within this last thirty years, gone to Bethnal Green and Shoreditch; many to Mile-end New Town, and many into the country, to Sudbury and other such places. There is in Bethnal Green a place called Twig Folly, from a basket-maker of Spitalfields who first began to build there. It was called Twig Folly, because it was considered folly to build houses there, as it was believed he would never get them inhabited, but there are now I believe a thousand or fifteen hundred weavers on the spot. I believe that the weavers removed from Spitalfields on account of the rent being cheaper and the light better in those other parishes. Perhaps also their work was more liable to be spoiled in Spitalfields, on account of the dye-houses and breweries which have recently been erected there.

Popular error with
relation to Spitalfields.

Have you had the means of observing the operation of the practice of giving out-door relief in aid of the wages of workmen in your parish?—Yes, I have. I think the practice first began systematically about nine years ago, when the price-book for the weavers or fixed rates of wages were removed. Before that time, the relief given in aid of wages was very trivial to what it has been since. About that time, a number of small masters who had been journeymen silk-weavers, set up in business. I have known several of these men, who report says are worth seventy or eighty thousand pounds, so poor that they were obliged to serve as soldiers in the Tower Hamlets Militia. These persons had been journeymen, and they "ground down" the journeymen. There being a great number of journeymen more than the demand for labour by the best masters, these small masters broke through the established or book prices, and compelled the journeymen to work at the very lowest rates. Mr. Hale never would give less than the book price, and he was therefore driven out of the market by the new system. These small masters obtained the raw silk on credit from the silk brokers, and when the goods were manufactured they sold them for small profits, and not unfrequently for less than they cost to the large city buyers who paid ready money. This sort of competition, commencing first with a number of labourers beyond the demand for them, brought down the wages of labourers and the profits of the masters. This is the account which I have got at times from various masters and men, in my conversations with them, and all my observations, so far as I have had opportunities as a man not in the business, have led me to conclude that this was the real state of the case.

Relief in aid of
wages to weavers.

Excess of the
number of labourers,
the first cause of
distress amongst
the weavers.

Do you find these causes admitted by them as sufficient to have produced the distress existing amongst the silk weavers?—All the journeymen to whom I have ever talked to, have admitted it.

Wages being thus brought down low, all sorts of privations were suffered by the weavers, who had formerly enjoyed good wages, they began to come in greater numbers upon the parish. Formerly the manufacturers used to advance wages in the progress of the work, but when wages were reduced, the workmen becoming distressed frequently embezzled the silk, or their associates stole it from them, and the masters not only lost the silk, but the wages advanced upon it. As the head of the police of that district, this course of things frequently came under my observation. The masters then began to refuse to advance any money until the whole pieces were finished; even on pieces which took from fifteen to twenty-five days. In this state of things the workmen were often obliged either to apply to the parish or pawn their goods for subsistence.

It appears from a printed paper circulated in the year 1793, it was then stated with respect to your district, that "An uncommon degree of temporary distress prevails at

P. L. (A.)—III.

Q 2

present

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Ultimate effects of
large charitable
donations.To this day the
parish has not got
the better of a cha-
ritable donation
received several
years ago from
Government.Annual officers have
not, and never can
have, the requisite
ability.No popular concep-
tion of the duties
requisite.

present among the labouring people in this quarter of the metropolis, in so much, that some of the oldest inhabitants have declared that they never knew an instance where so great a number of the labouring poor were destitute of the means of subsistence. And in addition to this distress, the magistrates upon inquiry have found, that the whole of the parish workhouses are already too much crowded to afford an asylum to any greater number of applicants, *and still the severe season is not yet set in.*"*

Have you heard similar statements made in your parish lately, and at various times, at intervals of a year or two, declaring that the distress each of those times was unexampled in severity?—Yes, for the last twenty years past; and my opinion is, that the parish is in a better state now than it was twenty years ago.

How do you account for that, there being now more paupers than at any former period?—I doubt whether there are now so many paupers as there has been. The chief reason for believing that the parish is improved is, that so many of the weavers have gone into Bethnal Green. The working men who remain, such as carpenters, bricklayers and those sorts of people, get as good wages as before, and provisions and every thing is cheaper.

You have had from time to time assistance from Government in your parish; what have been the effects of those donations?—That they have done great mischief, by causing paupers to come from all parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of sharing in the relief, and when they have once come there, they have invariably stopped there.

Do you believe that such donations have a tendency to create the distress which they propose to relieve?—I do, for there are numbers who would waste a whole day to obtain sixpence by charity, rather than work two hours to obtain sixpence by honest industry. I have seen in our own district abundant instances of this.

Do you believe that they relieve all the distress which they create?—Always when there has been a donation of these sorts, we find the parish burthens increased, and these burthens continue, but the donation goes away. Some years ago we received a large donation from the Government, and I do not believe that the parish has got the better of it to this day, for it made paupers, and attracted vagabonds from all parts.

In consequence of the low lodging-houses in your neighbourhood, are you not greatly burthened with vagrants?—Yes, of the worst description; and these are fixed upon us by the improper interference of the magistrates.

Will you specify the mode of that interference?—I have known summonses with recommendations for relief sent in as great a number as thirty or forty in a day, to the parish officers, without any inquiry having been made into their cases to ascertain whether they belong to the parish or not.—[*No summonses were ever granted without inquiring whether the pauper lives in the parish, which is all the law requires, all farther explanation must be left to the overseer, whose duty it is to make himself acquainted with the circumstances of his pauper. W.B.*]—One of the magistrates (Mr. Benett) seems to believe every thing that a pauper says. Some time ago, in company with Mr. Swabey, who was then a magistrate, he inspected our workhouse, where the poor were then, as they are now, much better fed than a large proportion of the independent poor. An old woman who had been a house-keeper, but was a little touched in her head, came up to make a complaint. I venture to say that she was upwards of twenty stone in weight; she was an enormous woman. She gravely complained that she had been in the house upwards of twelve years, and that during all that time she was kept in a starving condition. He gravely and seriously listened to this complaint, and in spite of the evidence before his eyes, and of what the master of the workhouse and myself told him, he talked of making inquiries into this case, until Mr. Swabey positively laughed him out of it. She at the same time found fault with the allowance of salt butter (the very finest Irish salt butter, such as I should myself eat at any time), when Mr. Swabey asked whether the paupers were to have fresh butter, for if the provision was to be of that description, he should himself be glad to retire to a workhouse.

Mr. Benett.]—Mr. Swabey was removed from Worship-street to Union Hall, about 13 years ago; I do not recollect, when visiting the workhouse with him, seeing a fat woman there; the diet of the house did not justify the idea of corpulency in any of its inmates. I revisited that house about eight or nine years ago on the repeated complaints of a man of the name of Entwistle, with a Mr. Curtis, a medical gentleman and a magistrate; the result of our visitation was, an increase in the allowance of potatoes, and an improvement in the ventilation of the house.

Have you considered of any other measures or proposed any for arresting the progress of pauperism?—In the next place, I am sure that no improvement can take place in the administration of the Poor Laws so long as it is left to parishes, or to such persons as the present unpaid annual officers. These officers have not, and never can have, the requisite ability; nor will they sacrifice their own time and interests to attend to the affairs of others. It is a thing morally impossible to have clever and able men willingly devote their time to the performance of such public duties without pay.

Might not paid and responsible officers be elected by the parishioners?—No; I think you would never get such offices well filled unless it was by accident. The people have no conception of what sort of men are requisite to perform properly the duties of a parish officer.

If

* One witness, who proposed to give evidence with relation to this district, stated, that if he had time to search them out, he could produce a series of statements of this sort, almost from year to year, proving that every year's distress was unexampled, and that the district had been sinking into the most abject state of misery.

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If such a situation were vacant, what sort of a man would apply for it?—Why, some decayed tradesman; some man who had got a very large family, and had been “unfortunate in business,” which, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, means a man who has not had prudence or capacity to manage his own affairs; and this circumstance is usually successful in any canvass for a parish situation to manage the affairs of the public. Men who have before been in office for the parish would obtain a preference.

And what sort of men are those who would be likely to be at liberty to accept a vacant situation?—The situations of overseer and churchwarden are by some considered situations of dignity; and dignity always attracts fools. I have known numbers of small tradesmen who were attracted by “the dignity of the office” and succeeded in getting made overseers and churchwardens. Their elevation was their downfall. They have not given their minds to their own business as before. The consequence of this was, that they have lost their business and have been ruined. Now and then a good man of business will be desirous of taking office when he thinks he is slighted, or has had an affront put upon him by being overlooked; but in general, any man in decent business must know, if he has the brains of a goose, that it will be much better for him, in a pecuniary point of view, to pay the fine than serve. I could name from fifteen to twenty people in our parish, who have been entirely ruined by being made churchwardens. These would be the people who would succeed best in parochial or district elections; for the people would say of any one of them, “Poor man, he has ruined himself by serving a parish office, and the only recompense we can give him is to put him into a paid office.” This always has been the general course of parish elections, and I have no doubt would always continue to be so. There is infinitely more favouritism in parish appointments than in government appointments. In appointments by the government there is frequently some notion of fitness; but in the case of parish appointments, fitness is out of the question. When I was the treasurer of the watch department of the parish, I took great interest in the management of the police of the district, and determined to make it efficient. You would conceive that the inhabitants would have been so guided by their own apparent interests, as to get active men appointed, but I had solicitations from some of the first and most respectable houses in the parish to take their old and decayed servants and put them on the watch. I had also applications from the parish officers to put men upon the watch who were in the workhouse. As I was determined to make the police efficient, I resolutely resisted all these applications. My opinion is, that the management should be entirely under a central authority, which should divide the country into districts. The whole of the county of Middlesex, including the city of London, should be included in one district. If there had been a government management, the abominable practice of making allowances in aid of wages, which together with the improper interference of the magistrates has been so ruinous in the parishes of Bethnal Green and Christchurch, Spitalfields, would never have been permitted. We should never have had, as we have had, silk masters, who have made rapid fortunes by giving their men low wages, and driving them on the parish for the rest of their means of subsistence.

When questioned as to the probability of parishes administering any improved system, or of forming any themselves, if they were relieved from magisterial interference, Mr. Gregory declared that they would not carry improvements to any extent, and that a good or systematic administration of relief was impracticable whilst parishes were constituted as at present. The relief of the poor should, he had considered, be administered more systematically in larger districts, and by paid and responsible officers. The rates should be collected in a uniform manner, chiefly under the control of the inhabitants. A commissioner should preside over a committee of inhabitants elected for the purpose; they would aid him with their local knowledge of the different values of the property. It would be the most satisfactory to the inhabitants to have an impartial government officer preside as judge; this would prevent much of the angry feeling which is excited by the inequality of the assessments, and would tend to prevent much of the jobbing which takes place on the parts of landlords who are possessed of small tenements.

[See further Evidence of this Witness under the head of “Pauperism and Crime.”]

EXAMINATION of Mr. Brushfield, of Spitalfields.

FROM Easter 1831 until Easter 1832 I was in active office in our parish.

Before I was in active office (which means having the relief or casual poor-book, and giving relief to the casual poor who come to the houses of the parish officers) I sat at the Board of Governors of the Poor, and saw the persons who applied to them for permanent relief. I was also cautioned that impositions would be attempted to be practised upon me.

The first day I was in active office (25th May 1831) a woman, named Kitty Daley, came to me for relief on account of the illness of her child: she came without her child. I knew this case, as the doctor said that something ought to be given to her on account of the child being ill of the small-pox. I gave her 6d. to serve until I had an opportunity of visiting her. In the course of the day, between the hours of ten and two o'clock, about forty or fifty applications were made to me for relief. Usually it is the practice of parish officers to give away money on the representations and the appearance of the parties; indeed it is scarcely possible for a tradesman who has a retail shop to avoid giving away considerable sums of money, as the applicants excite the sympathy of his customers, and if he does not comply with their demands they (the paupers) may, and do, raise mischievous tumults, and injure his business by their clamours and obstructions. They did injure my business in this way, and must injure the business of any man who does his

P.L. (A.)—III.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

THE WORSHIP-STREET DISTRICT.

The office conceived to be dignified; and dignity always attracts fools, who being ruined by their folly,

obtain sympathy, and are put into places of trust.

More favourites in parish appointments than in government appointments.

Instance of the frauds to be guarded against by new overseers.

Difficulties of a new overseer who is a tradesman.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Instances of the
practices to which he
is exposed.Mode of investigating
the cases of paupers
at their own resi-
dences.

duty. However, I determined to give no relief on the mere representations of the parties; I therefore took down the names and addresses of the applicants, for the purpose of visiting their residences. In the course of the forenoon, three women came to request relief, and each brought in her arms a child, which she said had the small-pox. The child was muffled up very carefully. One woman showed me the arm of the child; the other showed me the face of the child which she had; the third gave me a glance of the face of the child which she had. It appeared to me strange that there was so much small-pox about; but when I saw the face of this third child, it immediately struck me as being the same child that had been shown to me before, though it was now in a different dress. On visiting the places where the parties said they lived, it was found that about one-third of their statements of residence were falsehoods: no such persons were to be found. The names of some on the list were immediately recognized by the beadle as "Overseer-hunters," persons who make it their business to seek out and impose upon new overseers. Ultimately relief was not given to more than about twenty; the remainder, after much exertion, (which had never been undertaken before) having been ascertained to be cases of imposition. Few tradesmen who had the inclination would have had the time to go through the same investigation which, I dare say, was even then very imperfect. I found no where the three mothers who had each come with the infant afflicted with the small-pox, but on visiting the residence of Kitty Daley, there I found the very same infant I had last seen, and it was dressed in the same dress. She did not deny the fact that it was the same child that had been brought that morning in three different dresses by three different women. I accordingly gave her no relief.

Subsequently I pursued my investigations into the cases of other applicants for relief, and struck off many cases of fraud.

My mode of investigation was generally to visit the residences of those persons I suspected (which, by the way, was most of the paupers) on the Saturday. I never made inquiries elsewhere than of the parties on the spot. But on the Saturday they expect us, and I had generally some cause to doubt the appearances of their dwellings on that day. In general those who wished to impose upon us over-coloured the picture, and certainly the pictures they drew were often very appalling. One Saturday one of the churchwardens accompanied me, and visited ten places; the scenes of distress were quite frightful; there were two cases which appeared to be cases of extreme misery. In one house, that of a man named Bag, a man with a wooden leg residing in Pelham-street; we found him there sitting as if in despair; he said he had no work, and had had no food that day, or since the evening before. His wife was afflicted with a bad leg; she was in bed, and stated that she had not been able to get out of bed for six weeks. The room was in a miserable plight; it was dirty and wretched. I looked into the cupboard and found no provisions there. The appearance of the place was such that the churchwarden could not forbear giving the man some pecuniary relief at once. The other case was one of a man named Ansler, of Red Lion-street, who had for some time before been chargeable to the parish as an out-pauper. We found the appearance of the place most deplorable. There was no appearance of food or comfort, and the children were ragged, dirty, squalid and wretched. I told the wife to tell the husband to apply to me for relief in the evening, when I would give him relief, as I intended to do, being fully convinced of the necessity of giving relief by the picture of extreme misery which I had witnessed. The husband and wife came together to my house in the evening. I expressed my regret that they should be obliged to come to the parish, and asked if the husband had no prospect of getting work; he declared he had neither work nor any prospect of getting any at present. I judged by his appearance that he had been drinking, and said, "Well, call upon me in the morning, and I will see what I can do for you." They said that they were very much obliged to me, and went away, apparently quite pleased, although, according to their representation, they were absolutely in a state of starvation.

On the Sunday morning, I renewed my visit to most of those whose residences I had visited on the afternoon previous. The first case I visited was that of this man Ansler. I opened the door, and then knocked, when I found they were in bed; and in great haste she ran to a table, which was standing in the middle of the room, and covered it over with a cloth; but in her haste to get away, and confusion, she pulled the covering off, and exposed to my view a large piece of beef, a piece of mutton, and parcels of tea, sugar, bread, butter, &c. The man called from the bed, "B——t 'em, never mind; you know they belong to your father." I told them that was enough, and immediately left the place. They have never applied to the parish for relief since.

When I visited the house of Bag I found Mrs. Bag out of bed and at her breakfast; she had her tea and he had his coffee. I saw a neck of mutton on one shelf, and two loaves on another shelf of the cupboard, which was empty on the day before. I went into his workshop, (he was a silk dresser) which I found full of work. The man swore horribly, and I left the place. I do not know that he ever again applied to the parish.

My impression now is, that nearly the whole of the cases which we had visited on the Saturday were found to be each partially or entirely similar cases of imposition. This man, Bag, must have concealed his work under his bed, and idled away the whole of the Saturday, in order to make up the miserable scene which we first witnessed.

In some other instances we have found the provisions actually concealed between the sheets or blankets of their beds. Such instances were frequently presented on other visits.

I found it necessary on entering their dwellings and going up any common staircase, not to make the least noise; to approach them by stealth; or the scrutiny would have been defeated.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.*Further instances
of imposition.*

defeated. I think in all cases where the door was fastened, the parties were impostors. At those places where the door was fastened, it was necessary to kick very gently at the bottom of the door, as if it were a child at the door. A knock or tap at the door as from a man would have been the signal for preparation for disguise. In one recent visit made to a number of applicants, every one was found at the time to be a case of imposition.

It is quite common to find the applicants full of work in cases where they have declared they had no work whatever and were starving. In one case, I went up gently and opened the trap-door of a warper's loft, and found him deeply engaged with work of the best sort.

In one instance I visited a doll-maker's in Half-Nichol-street. My colleague visited the place with me, not for the purpose of investigation, but to give relief, as he said he knew them to be deserving objects. The door was fastened, and my knocking occasioned a great bustle. When I went in I saw the man sitting on a chair, very ill indeed, so ill that he could not work. However, on looking about, I saw under his lathe a basket full of dolls, which had evidently been very recently turned off. I said the lathe appeared to have been at work that day. The man declared it had not. I asked why they fastened the door? to which the wife made some frivolous answer. On this representation, the overseer who accompanied me gave them 2s., and inquired, what room that door led to? (pointing to a door which was fastened.) The wife said it was a place where they slopped in and where the children slept. I said I should like to see it, and asked her to open the door. She did not accede to this request, but began to occupy herself with other things, on which I told her, that if she did not open the door I would; she still refused, and I opened the door, when we saw there a very large quantity of toys finished and packed up, and two persons at work on other toys. This family has not since visited us. My colleague said that he would never again trust a pauper.

In another case, where a shoemaker, named Ward, applied for relief, I went with a colleague to visit the place. There was a long passage to the house; when we went, there was a child standing at the entrance of the passage; immediately that he perceived us he ran down the passage, and gave his father notice of our approach, and closed the door. I followed as quickly as I could, and as he was closing the door, I saw them removing something towards the bed.

When I went in I found them all sitting as if sunk in despair; one child was sitting on the bed; the father appeared very disconsolate. I said, "Dear me, have you no work, Ward?" He replied, "No, nor no victuals; nor my children." "What, no work?" said I. "No, none at all, nor no likelihoods of any." I said, "I think there is something like work in that bed of yours." He still declared that he had nothing like work. I said, "I'll be satisfied," and with that I went and took down the covering, and there I found what I suppose must have been the work (shoes, &c.) on which four persons had been recently working; I saw also some newly finished shoes under a stand. I then asked him how he could have looked at me and told such a falsehood. "Well," said I, "it is just as I expected to find it." Before I entered the house I had told the overseer who accompanied me when I saw the boy run away, "I expect we shall find something wrong here." I now appealed to him, saying, "I told you how I expected to find it." My colleague expressed his surprise at what he saw, and began a moral lecture to the man on the criminality of the deception he had resorted to. This lecture was abruptly concluded by the man's taking up a last, and threatening to hurl it at the head of my colleague, who thereupon made his escape.

In another instance, where a mechanic had represented himself in imminent want of relief on the Friday, I visited him on the Sunday; I just opened the door, and saw a goose roasting at the fire; I went no farther.

The case of Charles Jenkins forms another example. He was a weaver, who had had relief from our parish for some time. On his making application to the Board for relief, I asked him if he had any work. He said he had not any. From information I had received, I had reason to believe that he had work, and I requested that relief might be withheld until I could visit his case. This was on the Friday. On the Saturday he applied at my house for relief, which I refused. He summoned me; and, on my refusing to relieve him, he came accompanied by one of the officers of Worship-street, with an order from one of the magistrates. I still refused; and told the officer that I would visit the applicant before I relieved him; for I had every reason to believe him to be an impostor. He was very angry, and went away. On the Sunday morning I went, accompanied by the beadle. The beadle was at some distance, and I went into the house before the beadle came up. They were not aware that he was with me. As soon as I was inside the door, Jenkins was in the act of shutting the door, and said, "Now, I'll serve you out." The beadle at this moment pressed the door, and came in. They then appeared to be alarmed; when I said, "What, have you no work?" The woman said, "You may see we've no work, for here is part of our loom." I said, "I do not believe you." On my saying that, she took from the fire a poker, which was red hot, and said, "I'll spoil you for calling my husband an impostor;" she was running up to me fiercely, when the beadle came forward and threatened her, and she put the poker in the fire again. I said, "Have you no work up stairs?" They said, "No." I said to the beadle, "Just go up, and look?" She again fiercely threatened what she would do if either of us attempted to go up stairs. The man said, "If there was work, it was his brother's." On his saying that, I said, "then you are what I called you, an impostor." We were about leaving the place, when she again ran upon us with the red-hot poker, and assailed us, and hit me on the heel of the shoe with it. They did not apply again to the parish for more than a year afterwards.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Personal appearance
of paupers per se
uncertain evidence of
real want.Magistrates have a
sort of scale.Relief enforced by
the Magistrates.

Are these extraordinary instances, or do you adduce them as exemplifications of ordinary cases?—The last case I consider an extraordinary case, at least as far as regards the use made of the poker; but the other cases I have mentioned are in the essentials ordinary cases, and such as may at any time be found when the cases are investigated in the same manner.

Cannot you tell by a man's appearance as by his squalid countenance, whether he is in want?—Not always; there are many whose faces are naturally thin and squalid: and I have seen persons in good circumstances whose wretched faces and feeble voices would be wealth to a regular pauper. A regular gin drinker is often a most dreadful object. But a man may actually be in want at the moment. He may have spent all his money in debauchery, and relief of his immediate necessities may prevent his recourse to work, and remove all restraint when the next temptation is presented.

When the Soup Society commences operations do you find the number of your applicants increase or diminish?—I am quite sure that they do not diminish; I rather think they increase.

Do you find the same sets of people come to your parish who obtain relief from voluntary charities?—Yes, the same persons are charity hunters who are regular paupers. Experienced officers have told me that the numbers of paupers are increased by these charities.

Have you many able-bodied paupers in your parish of bad character who receive out-door pensions?—We have about a dozen or fifteen young men, and as many young women, of equivocal character; that is, who have no visible means of obtaining an honest livelihood. These receive relief out of the house; we have also some young men and women in the house. They get disordered, and dirty and filthy, and then we are obliged to get them in the house.

Do you not pay any regard to the character of the applicants when you give relief to the able-bodied?—I really cannot say we do; the magistrates go by a sort of scale; they say this is a man, and he must have so much. We are therefore prevented from acting.

If the magistrates made a distinction then you would?—Of course.

Do you ever urge upon the magistrates the bad character of the applicants?—Yes, I have done so, but never with any effect.

Do you find that the magistrates make inquiry into the cases of the applicants as to their need of relief; do they take their examinations on oath before summonses are sent?—I never knew them to do so.

Then what do you find to be the usual course of procedure before the magistrates?—Upon a pauper's application, a summons is granted. He is not sworn, neither are the circumstances of his claim investigated. One case will serve as an example. On the 4th of January, in the present year a summons was granted to eleven paupers, namely, Daniel Hopkins, Robert Barrett, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Osborne, John Norris, John Mathews, Benjamin Howiss, Benjamin Lockwood, John Caradine, Margaret Ebbs and Margaret Gollee, against myself, commanding me either to relieve them or appear before Mr. Benett on the next day, at twelve o'clock, to answer to him why such relief was not given.

The following is a copy of the Summons; the words which were filled up in writing being marked in *Italics*.

POLICE OFFICE, WORSHIP STREET, SHOREDITCH.

Established pursuant to Act of Parliament.

MIDDLESEX } To the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of *Christ Church*, in
(to wit.) } the said County.

WHEREAS *Daniel Hopkins, Robert Barratt, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Osborne, John Carrodine, John Matthews, Benjamin Howiss, Margaret Ebbs and Margaret Gollee*, hath this day complained to me, *William Benett, Esquire*, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the County of Middlesex, that *they are* very poor, and unable to provide for *themselves and their families*, and that *they have* applied to you for relief, and that you have refused to *them*: These are therefore in His Majesty's name to require you to relieve the said *paupers*, or personally to be and appear before me, or such other of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said County as shall be then and there sitting at the Police Office aforesaid, on *Thursday* next, at *Twelve* o'clock at noon, to show cause if you can why such relief should not be given to the said *paupers*.

Given under my hand and seal, on the *Fourth* day of *January*, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and thirty-two.

Wm Benett.

N.B.—It is requested that the *paupers, Hopkins, Barratt, Carrodine, Matthews, Howiss, Ebbs, Lockwood, and Gollee*, may be immediately relieved.—W. B.

I did not choose to give immediate relief. On the evening of the day on which the summons was granted (although the summons was not returnable until the next day,) I received a peremptory order from the magistrate in the usual terms to relieve all these persons.

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Appendix (A.)

The following is a copy of the Order.

POLICE OFFICE, WORSHIP STREET, SHOREDITCH.

Established pursuant to Act of Parliament.

Order for temporary relief.

MIDDLESEX } To the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of *Christ Church*, in
(to wit.) } the said County.

WHEREAS complaint has been this day made unto me, *William Benett, Esquire*, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said County, upon Oath, by *Samuel Johnson*, of your said parish, that he is very poor and impotent, and utterly unable to provide for himself: And that he hath applied to you for relief, which you have refused to grant; and it appearing to me that this being a case of urgent distress,

I do therefore, from the circumstances before stated, order and require you to grant him proper and necessary relief, that is to say, the sum of *Sixpence* daily, (unless you receive and maintain him in the workhouse of your said Parish;) this order to remain in force for *Seven* days, or until the assembling of the Guardians, Governors or Directors of the Poor of your said Parish, according to the Form of the Statute in such case made and provided.

Given under my hand and seal, the *fourth* day of *January*, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and *Thirty-two*.

W^m Benett.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

Now what were these cases?—*Thomas Osborne* was ordered to receive 2s. 3d. per diem, relief for himself and a wife and five children. It was true that this man had a wife and children; but the wife had a situation, and the children were living away from him. He was living by himself, and was in truth an able-bodied man, without any incumbrance. I ordered this man and family to be taken into the house; his answer was, "Why you know my wife is in a situation, and cannot come," although he must have sworn before the magistrates that she was burthensome. This order, however, got rid of him.

Samuel Johnson, an able-bodied young man, was ordered 6d. a day by Mr. Benett. This applicant was a man of bad character, who had robbed one of our overseers, but this would have been no justification in the magistrates' eyes for not relieving him.—[*How does the overseer know what would have passed in the magistrate's mind on such a representation, if proved? W. B.*—I did not give him anything, and I would not obey the order, but would attend to the summons.

Benjamin Lockwood, a weaver, a loose, lazy character, was ordered 1s. 3d. relief daily, for the support of himself and his wife and child. He was at the time living with his father and mother, and she and her child were also at the time living with her father and mother. I gave him some trifling relief.

John Norris, a young man who lived with his mother, who was in comfortable circumstances at the time. I ordered him into the house; he went out on the Friday. He did not trouble us again until his mother died.

Margaret Gollee, the wife of a Greenwich pensioner, a stout young woman, was ordered 6d. a day, which I refused to give her.

Benjamin Howiss and his wife was ordered 1s. This is a man who gets his living by selling muffins and roasted potatoes about the streets. I refused to relieve him, being convinced that he could maintain himself well. I do not think he has been on the parish since.

Robert Barrett, is an able-bodied young man. I refused to relieve him; we have never seen him since.

John Carrodine, an able-bodied man. I refused to relieve him.

Joseph Bell, a stout, able-bodied young man, lived at Islington at the time I ordered him into the workhouse. He did go in, but he went out the next day, or the day after, and he has never troubled us since.

Margaret Ebbs, is an able-bodied woman; she was an Irish woman, who had refused to be passed home, and therefore the magistrate was not justified in ordering her relief.—[*Was the magistrate informed by the overseer of that fact before he made the order. W. B.*]

Daniel Hopkins, his wife, and eight children were ordered 3s. a day. I refused to relieve them, on the ground that they did not reside in the parish. I may observe, with relation to this man's character, that I twice visited him on the Sunday morning, to investigate his claim; I was told on both occasions by the children, that "father and mother were at the corner," which I found meant a gin-shop. I saw the father come out of it as I was passing.

On the Thursday I appeared at the office, according to the summons.—[*He says, on the other side of this leaf, that the summons was granted on the 4th of January 1833; that was on a Friday; how then could he have appeared on the Thursday the day before the summons was granted; the succeeding day was on a Saturday when I do not preside at the office. W. B.*]* I remained there from half-past twelve until one o'clock. The inquiry was made at the door whether there were any Spitalfields paupers there, but none answered.

My colleagues, before I went, thought it was my duty to have relieved these cases. In general, implicit obedience would have been yielded to the order and relief would have been given, sooner than encounter the annoyance of having to attend before the magistrate, and thus a very serious burthen would have been entailed upon the parish.

Do

* It is proper, with respect to the witness, to state, that he produced the original summonses, signed by Mr. Benett; it is probable that the witness was mistaken as to the day.—E. C.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.

Do you receive summonses of the same sort from the magistrates very frequently?—Yes, I received on the Saturday before two summonses, with upwards of 40 names upon them; names chiefly of able-bodied single men and women.

Of what character?—I think those whose names I have specified afford a very favourable sample of them; other lots are much worse. Those are very decent ones, and peaceable, compared with others. I have had my windows broken; I have been personally assaulted by them many times; my shopman was assaulted by them; I have had the door blockaded by them, and business suspended, whilst they have threatened me.

What assistance has the magistrate rendered you in these cases?—What assistance? When I have applied to Mr. Benett, he has told me that I had got the office, and I must take the consequences of it, and I must have these unpleasanties.

Did you tell him how you had been hurt?—Yes, I told him how my shop had been surrounded, my business stopped, and my life threatened. I once complained that all these things occurred, and that I got no protection; upon which he said, I must not insult the Bench.—[*This is utterly without foundation. Assistance was never refused, when the officers were in the way, by any magistrate at Worship-street on such occasions. W. B.*]

Have you ever caused any of the characters you have mentioned to be apprehended?—Yes, for striking me, and breaking my windows.

How were they dealt with?—The sentences were from 3 to 14 days' imprisonment. One man who struck me received 14 days' imprisonment; another man, named Benjamin Serjeant, assaulted my shopman, and I think he received seven days' imprisonment. The defence was, that I had not given relief. I replied, as a witness, that I had given the man (who was a sturdy pauper,) an order for his admission to the workhouse. Mr. Benett's observation was, "You are very hard on these poor creatures."—[*I never objected to a pauper being admitted into the workhouse. W. B.*]

I would add another case illustrative of the interference of the magistrates, and of the working of the general system, of a man named John Macdonald, aged from 40 to 45. He had been a long time inmate of our workhouse; last March I investigated his case, found him able to get his own living, and ordered him to leave our workhouse. He was, when turned out, very troublesome to the person who was then a fellow-overseer with me, and had the book at the time, and he complained of my turning this man out of the workhouse, in consequence of the trouble he caused. I would not allow Macdonald to go again into the workhouse, but agreed to manage his case myself. He accordingly came to me for relief. I took him to whitewash some poor persons' houses in the parish. He asked me what I should give him a day; I said "1s.;" he swore he would not work for 1s. a day, and he went to the magistrates at Worship-street; got a summons, which I on the day after appeared to. Mr. Benett and Mr. Twyford were both on the bench; Mr. B. asked me why I refused relief to the poor man; I told him that I offered him work, but he refused to do it, and described the way in which he expressed himself to me about it. Mr. B. "Well, my good man, why is it you refuse to work?" Macdonald said, "Oh, sir, I was once wounded in my arm, and I can't do it." I told the magistrate he had not mentioned such a circumstance to me, but it was useless my pleading; the magistrate was in the man's favour, and took what he stated to be true. "Well," said I, "I'll find an easier job; I'll provide him with flannel, &c. to wash the floors after the white-washers." It was so agreed, and I was leaving the office. Macdonald said to the magistrate, "but how much does he mean to pay me?" "A very proper question," said Mr. Benett, and inquired of me how much a day I was going to pay him; I said, "the same as I give others, and some of them have families, 1s. per day." "That is too little," said Mr. Benett, "you must give him 18d. a day at least if he works."—[*I have never interfered with the rate of wages, and therefore I contend that the greatest part of this story must be a fabrication as far as it relates to me. W. B.*]

"Why, then," said I, "the others will want 18d. a day too, and I can get plenty to work for 1s. a day." "No matter, sir," said Mr. B., "that's what I think is proper for you to pay him if he works." "Really, your worship," said I, "this man, who is a sort of ring-leader among our paupers, is protected and encouraged by you; he sets me and the parish at defiance, in consequence of this sort of encouragement, and we, the officers, have our lives and property threatened with destruction, and we have no protection at all, but the reverse." "Don't insult the bench, sir," said Mr. Benett. I apologized, and withdrew, agreeing, as I was compelled to do, either to give him 1s. per day, or 1s. 6d. per day if he worked. The next day I commenced in the morning, and gave him 1d. He said, "I was to have 1s. a day." "Yes," I said, "but not all at once." At noon he came again; I gave him another 1d. He then got another summons for me. I immediately went to a Mr. Miers, a scavenger, and engaged with him to employ Macdonald, and I would pay him the 18d. per day. I sent Macdonald, and he continued at the work some days; at length he left it, and I did not hear of him again for a fortnight or three weeks, when he came into my shop respectably dressed. "Why, Macdonald," I said, "you now look something like; I'm really happy to see you look so well and so comfortable." "No thanks to you," he said; "I've got a place; a good place; and I'm come to give you a d——d good blow up." "What for?" said I. "What for," said he; "why, didn't you turn me out of the workhouse, and then almost starved me." "My good man," said I, "I'm the best friend you have in the world; had it not been for me, you had now been in our workhouse, and perhaps remained there all your life. Now," said I, "you say you've a good place, and you have a chance of becoming a respectable member of society, instead of continuing to be a pauper, as I found you." He took off his hat, shook me by the hand, and acknowledged that all I said was true; thanked me for my apparent cruelty, and said he should always have to be grateful to me. He has called on me twice

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
WORSHIP-STREET
DISTRICT.Witness shed tears
at the supposed
ill-treatment of the
paupers the first
time he presided at
the board.

or three times since, and I find by inquiry on Friday last, that he is still in the same situation he first went to, a large wheelwright's or carpenter's, on the Surrey bank of the Thames.

Do you think that any danger would result from making the decision of an elective vestry, or elective board of guardians, final in matters of relief?—Taking our own Board of Guardians as a sample, I should say, that if they err at all it is on the side of humanity. My own impressions with relation to pauperism have been the result of experience; I took office with the popular belief that the poor were exceedingly oppressed and maltreated, and that overseers and parish officers were men without hearts and sympathies, and made of cast-iron; and I was firmly determined to make the poor comfortable. The first time I sat at our board I shed tears at the representations which were made, and I thought that our chairman (who was an experienced and judicious officer) was extremely severe. I have seen others of my colleagues shed tears at the first cases which were presented to them; and these cases I have afterwards discovered to be such as I have already described. My conviction now is, that by far the largest proportion of pauperism is the result, not of any unavoidable distress or maltreatment, but of improvidence, influenced by the facilities which the system holds out to individuals, of being well provided for without work. This system can, I think, only be checked by an improved system of administration by efficient officers; persons in the situation of tradesmen cannot be expected to devote themselves to the performance of these duties without sacrificing their own interests and affairs. I am not sorry to have served the office of overseer, as it opened to me a new and very extraordinary view of mankind; but with regard to my pecuniary interests, I had better to have paid a hundred pounds than have served the office.

A great proportion of our out-door casual poor (although called casual, they are receiving relief from the parish, the most of them eleven months out of twelve) are able-bodied; some of them are stout single young men, who really will not work; they demand relief very frequently by a threat of breaking the windows, telling you at the same time, "You may send me to prison if you like; I shall live better in prison than out of it." Scarcely a relieving day passes without hearing such remarks. It is quite common for our parish to be relieving able-bodied persons, even when in work, chiefly weavers. Thus are the parish officers circumstanced: A man makes application; states he is out of work; the case is visited, and found to be as stated; he is relieved according to his family; when he gets work, he says nothing about it, consequently his weekly allowance from the parish continues; but suppose it is found out that he has work; he then says, "I only had it such a day, and until so much of the work (silk-weaving) is done, I cannot draw any money; and if you stop my 3s. or 4s. per week, I must give up my work again, and you must keep me and my family altogether." Well, as a matter of prudence and policy (so considered at least), the weekly allowance is continued; a week or two passes on; the same remark from the officers is met by the same menace from the pauper; another week, and the officers' remonstrance is met by, "I'm out of work again;" and on being questioned, "a sad loss," or some trumped-up story is told—"he was obliged to receive the money in advance, and when the work was finished, he had but 2s. or some trifling sum to receive, and therefore, very sorry, but my family can't starve, &c. &c. &c." Thus, whether in work or out of work, when they once become paupers, it can only be by a sort of miracle that they can be broken off; they have no care, no thought, no solicitude, on account of the future, except the old musty rent-roll of receipts, or an old dirty indenture of apprenticeship, which are handed down from father to son with as much care as deeds of freehold property, and by which they pride themselves in the clear claim to the parish money and the workhouse.

Characters of the
out-door paupers.

It is painful to contemplate the accumulated and still accumulating mass of crime which arises from the present system of Poor Laws. This is very easily seen by any person who takes the trouble to visit the cases of paupers. The scene is frequently made up for the occasion, and all the tricks and deceptions of which man is capable are resorted to; the vilest and most barefaced falsehoods are uttered, and all the worst characteristics of human nature are called into exercise, for the purpose of exciting a favourable feeling in their behalf; their *children are eye and ear witnesses to all this*. Need I say more than this to prove that the present system of Poor Laws, as at present administered, hold out all means of encouragement for imposture, have a direct tendency to the breaking down all moral obligations, and take away from our minds any degree of surprise we might harbour at the alarming increase of crime? The child remembers his father's actions, and the hereditary pauper increases his ranks by instruction as well as by example. Their numbers will, as a matter of course, still increase, while these laws exist in their present form.

Have you considered any remedies as practicable?—Yes. In the first place, I think the poor ought to be supplied, not by a parochial or district, but by a national equal rate. My reasons for this is, that the law of settlement, which opens a wide field for litigation and speculation, and therefore ought to be abolished, cannot be abolished without equalizing the poor-rate.

Witness favourable
to a national rate.

In the second place, it is my opinion that district central boards ought to be appointed, who should have complete control over the whole of the monies collected for the purposes of relief, &c. to the poor, and should hold places of appeal on all subjects relative to the poor, and their decision should be final. They should have the appointment of one or more superior officers, who should be a sort of inspectors, and also of overseers of the poor, who might be selected, as at present, by the parish for their approval; but such overseers of the poor, however selected or appointed, should not be allowed a wild discretionary power, which might be partially and unjustly exercised under the law as it now stands, but should be guided and

District boards
should be appointed.Discretionary
power on the parts
of the parish officers
should be with-
drawn.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

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Esq.THE
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DISTRICT.

and governed by a clear specific, a positive determined rule on the subject, entirely precluding the evil portion of that discretionary power in dispensing relief which is now too much exercised. For the impotent, the aged, the infant, &c. the present laws, I consider, need but little alteration, there appearing on this point the least difficulty imaginable, so that it is "fixed and determined." It is the able-bodied pauperism which appears to me to be the channel and floodgate of the evil which is pouring out its poison on society. His relief should be "fixed and determined," without one shadow of a shade or any chance of deviation; he should know what would be the inevitable result of his application for relief, and that he has no chance, by any system of deception that is in the power of man to devise, of avoiding harder fare than his own honest practice and labour would procure; this done, and the most serious evils of the present system would by a most simple process be entirely abolished; and although in some very particular cases it might appear a severe proceeding, yet am I perfectly satisfied, from what I know by close observation and experience, that not one case in a hundred would occur in which such a law would be otherwise than just in its principle, and most benevolent in its results; pauperism would be no longer a trade worth the following; and the man's interest, and all his means of possessing domestic and social happiness, would lie on the side of integrity and industry, instead of, as at present, on the side of duplicity, falsehood and deceit.

I think that workhouses ought to be provided (the present workhouses might suffice) for all able-bodied paupers, and no relief given to one of them out of the workhouse, and indeed their food and a *particular coloured clothing*, should be the whole of their allowance in the workhouse. They should be bound to do such work as they were able to do, by strict and severe regulations. It may be said that the workhouses ought under such a system to be enlarged; but instead of such being the case, I have not the least hesitation in stating what I think to be a fact, that the present workhouses would be found much more commodious than required, and would have, on the average throughout the country, not one in five of their present number of such inmates. Indeed I would be bold enough to hazard the assertion, that if such an alteration as this last only was put in practice, viz. particular coloured clothing, harder work, harder fare and the workhouse, not one week would pass over without its good effects being evident to every one.

The central boards, of course, would be the administrators of an Act of Parliament, "fixed and determined," where it could be, even as respected themselves.

Specification of the
evils of discre-
tionary power.

You consider, then, that much of the evil now found to exist in the operation of the Poor Laws is ascribable to the discretionary powers possessed by the parish officers?—I must confess that I consider a great portion of the evils now found to exist in the operation of the Poor Laws may be ascribed to the discretionary power placed in individual irresponsible hands, and that the present laws, bad as I consider them to be, might be rendered tolerable, and in some degree beneficial, if such power was taken from the hands of individuals and vested in a public board of, say, 10 persons. My reasons for such an opinion are—

1st. That as the office of churchwarden or overseer is generally filled by a tradesman (in the metropolitan parishes at least), frequently a retail tradesman, who is perhaps entirely dependent on the neighbourhood immediately around him for success in his business, it would be matter of wonderment in the mind of any man conversant at all with the world and human nature, if, in some cases at least, the funds which such persons have the right of disposing of with impunity are dispensed at the dictation of other motives than the desire of relieving the distressed; if partiality towards particular individuals is not frequently found directing the hand which holds the parish purse; and if the funds are not often bestowed, from motives of self-interest, on most improper and undeserving objects belonging to the same religious society. I look upon the tradesman that fills the office of overseer as holding a place of temptation to serve his own interests, to show partiality to his own circle of favourites; and I am sure no man ever filled the office that was more just, upright and impartial than the discretionary powers appended to the office would lead men acquainted with mankind and social life to suppose or expect him to be. I say this much from personal proofs of its operation on a tradesman, being myself a tradesman. When I served the office of overseer I was incessantly importuned by persons that I knew had no need of it for assistance, or "a trifle," as they would say, or a pair of shoes, or some article of clothing, with this universally used argument in favour of their claim, "I have *dealt* with you a many years, never lay out a farthing any where else, and I never *did* have anything from the parish; I *know* you can do it if you like, and it is nothing out of *your* pocket;" and they give pretty broad hints that if you do *not* comply with their requests, they will never lay out another farthing with *you*. I lost many customers by my non-compliance with their importunities, and I am certain that every overseer similarly situated must feel the same inconvenience which I felt. Sometimes persons on whom you are in some way dependent apply to you in behalf of some of *their* favourites, and you are placed in a very awkward predicament as to how to act. You do not wish to offend your friend, and you do not wish to do wrongfully with the parish money. Here stands the balance of the matter; which of the two impressions kick the beam? By adopting one plan, you wrong the parish and are an unworthy steward; by adopting the other, you perhaps sacrifice your best prospects in life, and injure your family. What honourable-minded man, dependent on his neighbours for support in his business, would wish, by being made overseer, to be placed on either of the horns of such a dilemma? Another point:—As we are not all constituted alike, not all of equal firmness of character, how readily may some men, for want of strong nerve, and promptness and boldness in decision, be imposed on; how many, for want of time to investi-

gate cases, or for want of sufficient penetration, may also be imposed on. And what good arises from their discretionary power? None whatever to the community. It suits well the person who abuses the trust to serve his own individual interest, and what follows? Why, it will be found that the very persons who, from some cause or other, under the reign of a favourite overseer, touch the parish money, *at first* without needing it, have considered it too easily got at to give up, and so, neglecting their own business and giving up their dependence on their own industry, have become confirmed paupers to their lives' end; and as you rarely find children deviate much from the paths or example of their parents, particularly in the case of pauperism, you may presume that the parishes would not miss from their weekly pension list the name of the family, even at the parents' death. Thus the discretionary power, in the first place, contains the very germ of and encouragement to pauperism.

2dly. That the discretionary power is mischievous in a very high degree to the overseer, particularly if he is a retail tradesman, and dependent on the immediate neighbourhood; and it is from *their knowledge* that he *possesses* the power that he is importuned by them, and the more dependent he is the more he is importuned, and the more temptation has he to submit to their importunities. If it was known that he did not possess this discretionary power, these unpleasant circumstances would be avoided, his labour would be considerably lightened, and, having a positive and fixed guide from which he *could not* deviate, his mind would not be harassed and perplexed as it at present is with the fear of doing less or more than his duty, and no person would have any chance of using threats, or proceeding in any way to influence him in the exercise of his duty. It would be far the most satisfactory mode to the mind of every honest man, and would be far more beneficial to the parish when persons filled the office who would not be very cautious, or take much care (leaving worse characteristics out of the question) of those monies which, under the present system, they may dispense as they please.

Do you think that a compulsory system of relief might be prescribed by the legislature?—Yes; but I conceive there must be some means taken to compel. Of what use will it be to declare that parish officers shall go in a certain course, unless some other means are taken to see that they do so. That is the difficulty.

Do you consider that any material improvement might be made in the present laws which relate to the subject of bastardy?—I certainly consider this as a subject of very great import, and will to the best of my ability answer the question; and although I consider that in my opinion *considerable improvement might be made in the law on the subject*, I still must confess that a great portion of the evils to be complained of are attributable to the non-execution of the existing law, or to its misapplication; and I will here show, in accordance with my advocacy of fixed laws on the subject of Poor Laws generally, that this particular part of the system is a striking illustration of my position.

*Bastardy laws,
effects of.*

It is the usual custom when single women are pregnant, for them, as a matter of course, to make application to the parish officers for relief, to be allowed admission into the work-house. The parish officers inquire as to her settlement. She belongs to their parish; but they find that the father of the child is single, and belongs to another parish, and acting for the benefit of their own local circumscribed boundary, they immediately begin a sort of negotiation for the purpose of marrying the father and the mother previous to the birth of the child. Such negotiations frequently succeed, and so by removing the burthen from the shoulders of their parish altogether, a comparatively light burthen, they inflict on a neighbouring parish a heavy load, and on society a perpetually increasing evil. To such sources may be attributed, as I conceive, a very great portion of that misery, immorality, want of care and affection for their offspring, attachment to home, respect for themselves, and for domestic economy, which are so prevalent among the labouring classes of society. That such negotiations are anticipated in many cases by the parties is very evident, for on the first application to the parish officers, the young woman is ready with "He's willing to marry me *if he could afford it*, and he does not belong to you." (viz. your parish) In several cases I have known the mother appear at the parish board to advocate the daughter's cause and justify the deed, as far as the daughter was concerned, and urge the *pulling up* the young man, and point out to the governors the law on the subject, and how much she would be satisfied, with, &c. with all the boldness and effrontery imaginable; and such fearful strides has depravity made in society under the sanction of these laws, that some cases have come within my observance of late of unmarried pregnant women applying to the parish board of governors and directors of the poor to be apportioned off to men, with whom they acknowledged they never had had any connexion whatever! What happiness, what fire-side comfort, what endearing affection or regard can exist under such circumstances? What blessings can society expect from such a source? Do we gather grapes from thorns? These are among the results of the present system; and while that system exists it will be matter of calculation and prudence as respects their own bounded locality on the part of governors and managers of the poor and the parish affairs to follow in the same steps. So long as the opportunity of removing a slight load from their own shoulders exists, they will always be found to take advantage of the easiest and cheapest method of accomplishing that end. Although it is by creating and casting a heavy load on others, and although they must and *do* acknowledge the many evils that such a proceeding produces in society, they shield themselves behind the "tit for tat" argument of only doing to others what others do to them. This reciprocity of evil-doing is the

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bane and the sacrifice of a great portion of society's peace and happiness. Such is the working of the present bastardy laws as administered. If fixed and positive laws were made and acted upon, so that the parishes should have no power to relieve but through the channel of punishment to both or either party troubling them, leaving the mother to seek her own remedy against the father for the injury done her, and for the support of the child, &c. &c. instead of parish officers making a compromise with the guilty parties, not one case would occur in ten that now is found to occur. The chance, I would say, the certainty felt of a compromise is and must be a direct and pointed encouragement to both parties for the commission of the deed, and is a beacon of temptation which it is not at all surprising should have been looked up to, and have been a directing point for a very great portion of the cases of bastardy which occur; and so long as the present system exists so long will cases of bastardy continue to increase in a very heavily progressive ratio. Perhaps some improvement would be made on the present system by making the mother's settlement the settlement of the child; but this would be more palliative than remedial; still it would be better undoubtedly than the present mode, and would not cause the same evil consequences to social life, and would probably cause parish officers to punish those they now bargain with. Another point now strikes my memory on this subject, which I consider as encouragement to bastardy. When a man marries the mother of his own illegitimate child, he immediately applies to the parish for the continuation of the usual weekly allowance, and this allowance is frequently granted. We have several such cases now on our regular weekly pension list. I need not give an opinion as to the results of such a mode of proceeding; I may add, that cases sometimes occur where a man marries a woman who has more than one illegitimate child, and although they belong to him, yet in consequence of the mother choosing to *lie-in* in different parishes, the children have different places of settlement, and she (or rather he) receives from each of the parishes her regular weekly allowance.

The reason why the parish officers do not issue warrants against the fathers of bastard children, in case the fathers are *poor* is, that by taking the mother before the magistrates to swear the child, an order of affiliation is made on the father for a certain sum, say 3s. per week, which he being unable to pay, it becomes the imperative duty of the parish officers to fulfil the engagement made by the magistrates' order, without any return from the father of the child but by imprisonment; and without going through this process, they are left the opportunity of managing the matter themselves, and settling an allowance on the mother considerably less (perhaps half the amount) than by punishing the father they would be compelled to give her.

[See farther the evidence of this Witness under the heads of EDUCATION, and CHARACTER OF LABOURERS TO WHOM PAROCHIAL RELIEF IS INELIGIBLE, OR WHO ARE INDEPENDENT OF IT.]

ST. LUKE, OLD STREET (MIDDLESEX.)

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION,					MONEY	
	In- habited.	Unin- habited.	Build- ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.	Expended on Relief of the POOR.	
1801	3,776	61	—	—	—	26,881	7,033	—	1776 1785 1803 1815 1821 1823 1824 1825 1826 1827 1828 1829 1830 1831 1832	£. 5,130 4,216 11,105 14,072 14,970 13,631 13,643 14,388 13,214 18,561 20,344 20,480 20,716 17,628 18,390
1811	4,431	109	60	—	—	32,545	8,499	—		
1821	5,600	280	83	19,987	20,889	40,876	10,600	—		
1831	5,813	685	47	22,307	24,335	46,642	10,141	12,420		
MANUFACTURE.				1831.	All others no com- prised in the two preceding Classes.		1831.			
No. of Families chiefly employed in Trade, &c. -				7,447	No. of Families -		2,694			
Males 20 Years of Age, employed in Manufacture -				435	Males 20 Years of Age, not Ser- vants, nor includ- ed in the two pre- ceding Classes -		1,731			
Ditto, employed in Retail Trade -				7,873						
Capitalists, Bank- ers, &c. -				460	SERVANTS.					
Labourers employ- ed in Labour not Agricultural -				1,793	Males 20 Years old — under 20 - Females -		128 386 1,386			

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EXAMINATION of Mr. James Wall, Vestry Clerk of St. Luke's.

I HAVE been in office five years. There are forty-eight guardians of the poor, elected by vestrymen rated at 30*l.* or upwards, or by having served the offices of churchwardens and overseers, and rated for the relief of the poor. The number of assessments in the parish are 6,500; of these 1,300 are rated at 30*l.* and upwards, and the occupants are consequently vestrymen. The forty-eight guardians of the poor are divided into six committees of eight each. It is the duty of all these committees to attend what is called the "Weekly Committee," the chief duties of which are to afford relief to applicants, to admit or discharge persons from the workhouse, to audit the account of the relieving overseer, to order the payment of sums of money which are necessary to be paid weekly, and the incidental expenses incurred during the week, and also to attend to any matters connected with the internal management of the workhouse. These are their chief duties; and the chief object of the division of the guardians of the poor into the eight committees is to divide equally the performance of the duties of the office. The churchwardens and the six overseers are *ex officio* members of each weekly committee, but are not subject to fines for non-attendance. Besides these committees, we have a committee called "The Workhouse Committee," who meet perhaps once a month. Their duties are to examine as to the management of the poor of the workhouse, to examine the mode in which the master and matron have discharged their duties, and regulate the labour of the paupers. They also examine each of the paupers once in three months. There are also a "Committee for auditing Accounts;" a "Committee for the Examination of the Rate Books," to see that they are properly made, and to examine at their close to see whether all has been collected which ought to be collected, and whether that which has been collected has been paid in to the treasurer; a committee called "The Pay Committee," who are alone authorized to sign drafts on the treasurer, who meet on the second Thursday in every month to make all payments which have previously been made by the general board; a "Store Committee," who have the care and management of all the stores received and consumed in the workhouse; a "Committee to hear appeals from defaulters on the payment of Rates:" this committee sits quarterly previous to the holding of a petty sessions for the enforcement of the payment of the rates. A committee called the "Committee for taking the changes in Assessments, and checking the Empty Houses," the duty of which is to go round quarterly with the collectors to ascertain what new houses have been erected, whether any extension requiring an alteration in the assessment has taken place in any of the premises previously assessed, and to check the collector's report of each house reported by him to have been empty during the quarter. This committee is composed of the guardians of the poor residing in each liberty, who serve on the committee for that liberty in which they reside. The overseer, appointed for each of the six liberties into which the parish is divided, acts on the committee for his liberty. Next we have a "Committee appointed to manage the Gift Estates," certain estates in this parish which are held jointly with the parish of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, of which St. Luke's parish formerly was part. The proceeds of these estates are to this parish about 900*l.* per annum. The practice of the quarterly examination or "overhaul" of the paupers, when every pauper is seen by the committee, was carried into effect about three years ago, and was found very beneficial. At the first overhaul, sixty-nine were discharged from the workhouse, some with small weekly allowances, but the greater number as being capable of getting their own living. By one of the regulations of the workhouse, it is provided that the master or matron shall bring before the Weekly Committee all persons whom they consider fit to be discharged. This duty has of late been so strictly performed, that it has been found necessary to discharge few persons, comparatively, at recent overhauls; but the regular performance of the duty I consider an indispensable check and a great improvement on the workhouse management.

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administration of the
Poor Laws.**The Weekly Com-
mittee.**The Workhouse
Committee.**The Committee of
Accounts.**The Pay Committee.**The Store Com-
mittee.**The Committee for
taking the charges in
Assessments, and
checking the Empty
Houses.**The Gift Estates
Committee.**The relieving over-
seer found to possess
too large a discre-
tionary power.**Discretion transferred
to each overseer in
each liberty of the
parish.**Paupers assembled
round the house of
each overseer in each
liberty, and an in-
crease of expenditure
produced.**Plan abandoned.
A visiting overseer
appointed.*

Some time ago we found the sums for casual relief distributed by the relieving overseer increasing at an alarming rate. It was considered that that officer possessed too large a discretionary power, and that there were not sufficient checks imposed on the expenditure. It was considered that the applicants were too numerous to admit of a proper inquiry on his part, and that this circumstance had a tendency to increase their numbers, by giving additional facilities to fraud. The remedy then attempted by the guardians of the poor was to require the paupers residing in each of the liberties of the parish to apply to the overseer of his liberty, who would, at his discretion, give an order on the relieving overseer for the amount of relief. The order was made on a printed form, which was preserved as a voucher, to be examined on the settlement of the accounts by the Weekly Committee. An effectual check was thus obtained against any *malversation* on the part of the relieving overseer; but it was found that, from the inexperience of the annual overseers, from their being in business, together with the paupers assembling round each of their houses daily, insisting upon relief, and obtaining it by clamour, and thereby injuring the business of the parochial officers; that the operation of this plan was injurious, and productive rather of an increase of the expenditure than a diminution. It was therefore discontinued after about twelve months' trial. The plan subsequently adopted was the appointment of a visiting overseer, in addition to the relieving overseer. The duty of the visiting overseer is to make inquiry into the circumstances of every applicant for relief, and repeat his visits of investigation, so long as the parties continue to apply for relief. His duties may be considered as a division of the duties of the relieving overseer, as pointed out in Articles IV. V. VI. VII. and VIII. of the duties of the relieving overseer, as set forth in p. 18 of the rules and regulations for the management of the workhouse. The following are the terms of these duties:

"IV. He is invariably to attend to all summonses issued by magistrates requiring the parochial officers to show cause why parochial relief should not be afforded to any person who shall apply to them; and

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and shall preserve all summonses and orders he may receive, and file and number them, and write thereon, or otherwise record the proceedings adopted by him on each of such summonses or orders, for the future information of the guardians of the poor.

" V. As to casual poor, he is to receive and examine all who apply for relief, or whom he may be directed to visit by any churchwarden, overseer or guardian of the poor; he shall visit their habitations, and ascertain their legal settlement and real circumstances, previous to his giving any relief; and he is to enter in a book in alphabetical order the particulars of the christian and surname, residence, condition, whether married, widow or single, health or disease, whether settled or not, number of children, age, occupation, character, and the cause assigned for distress, of each person whom he shall so relieve.

" VI. He shall insert in a book to be kept for that purpose, the name and residence of every person to whom he shall give casual relief, together with the amount of relief given, and such book shall be presented weekly to the Casual Poor Committee, to be examined and approved by them; and after such examination and approval, shall be signed by two members of such Committee, and shall be produced at every weekly meeting of the Guardians of the Poor, and be signed by the chairman; and the amount of the weekly disbursements shall be then ordered for payment, and be drawn for on such treasurer forthwith.

" VII. As to sick poor requiring medical attention, he is in like manner to visit them, and then may give them orders for medical attendance by the Surgeon Apothecary employed for the out-door poor by the Guardians, and shall number all such orders, and enter them with the names and particulars as directed with respect to the casual poor, in a book to be submitted to the next weekly meeting of the Guardians of the Poor, and signed by the chairman presiding thereat.

" VIII. As to all persons receiving temporary pensions and desiring their renewal, he is to ascertain the state of their health and circumstances, the number in family, weekly earnings, cause of distress, character, and any other matter that can assist the Guardians to determine on the propriety of renewing such temporary pensions, and the amount proper to be granted to such persons; he shall enter in a book to be kept for that purpose, the names of all persons to whom temporary pensions are granted from time to time, and he is to add to the name of every temporary pensioner paid by him, the amount of such temporary pension, the date when it was ordered, and the time for which it was granted; and such book shall be produced at every weekly meeting, and remain on the table during the whole thereof, and be signed by the chairman."

We might have calculated on an increased expenditure for this year. There have not been so many complaints from paupers as might have been anticipated from the amount of the reduction.

When relief was given on the Monday, workmen preferred spending their Mondays in seeking relief, rather than return to their regular work.

The Weekly Committee.

The relieving overseer has an office at the workhouse, at which he attends on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, together with the visiting overseer. They then afford relief to all proper objects. Cases of immediate necessity occurring on Mondays or Wednesdays when there is no relieving officer sitting, may be relieved by the relieving overseer; but those cases are of very rare occurrence, and do not require perhaps 10s. a week on an average. Formerly we gave relief every day in the week. It was apparent that considerable mischief resulted from giving relief on the Monday, as it was found that many persons who could obtain employment would prefer seeking relief on that day to returning to regular work after the Sunday. It was then determined to restrict the administration of casual relief to three days in the week. This was found very beneficial; no inconvenience resulted to the deserving poor, whilst the officers used to prosecute their inquiries one day and relieve the next. The permanent officers have the power of sending applicants into the house daily in all cases of emergency.

The Weekly Committee sits at the workhouse every Friday. Formerly persons were admitted to the Weekly Committee indiscriminately on one week; when any applications might be made, either in the way of an appeal from any refusal of an officer to give the relief applied for, or in the way of an original application. This practice was found prejudicial. We have had as many as 300 applicants of a night. It was impossible to investigate the cases of such a crowd, and as there was the opportunity, so it was extensively made use of, for imposters to represent themselves as parishioners, to obtain relief in that character. Now, no person is admitted before the Weekly Committee without an order from the relieving or visiting overseer, or from a member of the board, who is in that case expected to be present, and to have made himself acquainted with the circumstances of the party applying for relief.

For the purpose of ascertaining whether the deserving poor were properly treated, and also to take care that the undeserving did not impose on the parish, it was determined in August 1830 that each of the eight members of the Weekly Committee should be required to investigate a case of a family who received casual relief, and to report thereon to every weekly meeting. It is left to me to select the eight cases, and I generally endeavour to give to each member a case as near as may be to his residence, in order not to give unnecessary trouble. The member is also furnished in his notice with the amount of relief which is said to have been given to the family by the relieving overseer. The visits of the committee besides serving the purposes before stated, also serve the purpose of a check on the correctness of the accounts of the relieving overseer, as each visitor has the means of learning whether the sum charged has been distributed.

How do you find these visits operate in the way of detection of impostures?—Here and there a member of the committee has detected cases of imposition, but for the detection of imposture we mainly depend on the permanent officer. The annual overseer has not the knowledge requisite; he does not see the imposture, and goes out of office at the time he becomes acquainted with its duties.

The result of the change so far has been in this parish, that no one is now relieved except on inquiry into the case by a skilful and responsible officer. The parish is thus saved from the unavoidable consequences of the granting relief by officers who had not the requisite

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requisite knowledge or time, and who were frequently exposed to grievous annoyance or severe injury by the efficient discharge of their duty. We have devised a mode of keeping the accounts of the casual relief, which has been in operation about twelve months, and we deem it effectual as a check against malversation, whilst it serves to record all requisite information on that head.

For several years past a new system of paying the pensioners has been adopted in our parish. Formerly they came in crowds, the regular pensioners being then about 800, and were paid promiscuously on the presentation of their cards. It was found that some persons obtained payment twice over by getting other persons to present their cards after they had been once paid. The whole coming together, a large proportion of them was kept waiting a considerable time, and in addition to the time lost by the paupers, there was much mischief done by an extension of the opportunities of communication, and the formation of vicious acquaintances. The mothers of bastard children might form acquaintances with others still more depraved. The children of more creditable people became familiar with the confirmed paupers.

Each pensioner has a ticket, with a number corresponding with the number entered in the book. The pensioners are paid in sets of 100 each; each 100 is paid, and each payment entered within a quarter of an hour. Any person within the same 100 may be paid within the same quarter of an hour; the quarter of an hour, it may be observed, is printed on each ticket. If the party does not attend at the proper time their pension is suspended during the ensuing week. An hour and a half of the pauper's time is thus saved; and on an average, the crowd is reduced from 800 to 50, and the commission of fraud by repeated payments on the same ticket, is rendered impossible.

We have seldom more than 50 of these tickets, and they are paid after the permanent pensioners.

What is your opinion of the prevalent characters of the paupers in your district?—Many of them are hereditary paupers, and it is found a most difficult thing when a person has once become a pauper, to emancipate him from that condition. The majority of the other persons are persons who have been reduced to a state of pauperism by improvidence, or by vicious habits, rather than by unavoidable causes. Many of them might now obtain work if they were sober. The following is a list of the male adults in the workhouse, setting forth their former occupations :

Bakers - - 4	Carvers and Gilders 2	Labourers - - 56	Stonemasons - - 2
Basketmaker - 1	Clothworkers - 2	Painters - - 3	Swordcutler - - 1
Bedsteadmaker - 1	Combmaker - - 1	Paviour - - 1	Tailors - - - 8
Blacksmiths - - 4	Diesinker - - 1	Pewterer - - 1	Tinplate workers - 3
Bookbinder - - 1	Dyers - - - 2	Poulterer - - 1	Watergilder - - 1
Bricklayers - - 4	Engraver - - 1	Sawmaker - - 1	Watch business - 15
Brushmakers - - 2	Fishmonger - - 1	Sawyers - - 5	Weavers - - - 10
Bucklemaker - - 1	Gardeners - - 2	Servants - - 15	Wheelwright - - 1
Butchers - - - 2	Hairdressers - 2	Shoemakers - 11	Wireworker - - 1
Cabinetmakers - 2	Japanner - - 1	Stickmounter - 1	Woodturners - - 2
Carpenters - - 7			

Many of the mechanics now chargeable to the parish had wages from which they might have made adequate provision for their later years. But even the reflecting amongst them are well aware (and state when they are remonstrated with), that there is a sure provision for them and their families, do what they will. That provision is a better maintenance, better food and better lodging than the poor working people, as mechanics generally have. Able-bodied persons are anxious to come into the workhouse. Persons who come into the house in consequence of sickness or accident find the mode of living so good, or so much better than they expected, that they are anxious and endeavour to remain there. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that these persons will not deny themselves any present indulgence for the sake of making a provision for the future; the recklessness of the people in indulgence is quite frightful. It is well known that a large proportion of those who receive pensions, or out-door relief from our parish, cannot resist the temptation of going into the first public-house or gin-shop, and at all times immediately after money is given, paupers will be found in the gin-shops in the directions from the workhouse. One of the most mischievous things the legislature ever did, was the reduction of the duty on spirituous liquors. Spirituous liquors were too accessible before the reduction of the duties, but the reduction of the duty has greatly increased pauperism, and spread the evils of habits of intemperance.

Do you not find that relief in kind, or bread, serviceable as a check to these habits?—Yes; we have found it so in the instances where the board have allowed bread, which is only to some persons who have been conspicuous for their drunkenness. But in general, the feeling of the board has been against the universal distribution of bread to all the poor.

What are the descriptions of paupers whom you find it the most difficult to satisfy?—The idle and the dissolute; the young and able-bodied of both sexes; we have upon the parish a number of young men whom the officers call thieves, and who most likely are so, and a number of young women who are known and avowed prostitutes. We have, perhaps, 20 or 30 of each.

If we decline to relieve them they obtain a summons from the magistrate. When the summons is heard, they state they have neither food nor work, and the magistrate then tells the parish officers that they must find them work or relief. As we have no work for the females, we are compelled to relieve them out of the house, and we have several of them who are permanent pensioners, as we found that they would get more relief by continued

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congregating, and
relieving paupers in
crowds.

The nuisance abated.

General character of
the paupers.Paupers have better
food than self-sup-
porting workmen.One of the most mis-
chievous things the
legislature ever did,
was the reduction of
the duty on spirituous
liquors.Why bad characters
relieved.

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DISTRICT.Children in the work-
house afterwards
return to the parish
as prostitutes.

casual applications. If they are sent in the house they manage to create such disturbances that it is necessary to expel them. Last week there were six girls of this description in the workhouse, who refused to work, and walked arm in arm about the yard, singing obscene songs in the presence of the other paupers. They refused to desist, and it was necessary to take them before the magistrates at Worship-street. Mr. Benett presided. When the case was stated, they had nothing to say in their defence; but the magistrate asked them, whether they would behave better for the future, which they all (of course) promised to do. He dismissed them, with an admonition that if they behaved so again he would commit them to prison. They returned to the workhouse in triumph. In the evening of the same day we had them all brought up before the Board, and they were ordered to be dismissed on the next day from the workhouse. This was received by them with a laugh of contempt at the Board. These persons are now so fixed on the parish, that if they are refused relief the first course is to break the windows, for prisons have no terrors for them. It is impossible to prevent such characters as the classes of male and female paupers getting into the house, or when there, to prevent them holding communication with the youths who may happen to be in. I have known girls as children in the workhouse afterwards form part of the prostitutes chargeable upon the parish.

My opinion is, that the magistrates of Worship-street have too much business to allow them to investigate properly pauper cases, which perhaps will account for their treatment of parochial officers. But I think a magistrate ought not to grant one summons without a close inquiry into such case, nor should he make an order for relief until the parties have been heard upon the summonses.

Mr. Benett.—This is never done by me until two summonses have been disobeyed by the overseer.

We have had 16 persons included in one summons, which was to have been heard on the next day; but because the recommendation of immediate relief has not been at once attended to, an order has been made on the same day for immediate relief, though the parties have never been heard.

Mr. Benett.—Two summonses in this case had been disobeyed before the order had been made.

These summonses seldom, indeed, I may say never, contain the name of a *respectable* pauper, or of a man who is not a bad character.

Mr. Benett.—The magistrate cannot distinguish the respectable pauper except through the information of the overseer.

Sometimes they will go to the police-office directly from the workhouse with the money they have there received, and will yet declare (not being sworn, as they ought to be,) that they have had no relief. They have returned and thrown down the order from the magistrate, saying, "We have been to your betters, and you see what you have got to do."

Mr. Benett.—No order is ever entrusted to a pauper by me; it is always entrusted to an officer, who serves it, and keeps a copy of the service.

In general, the parochial officers must submit. Magistrates we find more anxious to be popular with the paupers than with the parochial officers.

I am decidedly of opinion that some establishment should be formed in the metropolis for the administration of parochial business exclusively. It would save immense sums of money and prevent great demoralization.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Richmond, one of the Guardians of the Poor of St. Luke's.

[See the Testimony of this Witness as to the temptations to jobbing, and the latent grounds of opposition to an amendment of the Poor Laws, *ante*, p. 9.]

Great cause of litigation.

I CONSIDER one great cause of the increased expense of litigation from disputed settlements to arise from the vestry clerks of nearly all the larger and populous parishes in the metropolis and provincial towns being professional and practising lawyers.

Wherever the amount of salary and emoluments are of sufficient magnitude to render them an object, or even where the influence derived from the situation can be made subservient to an increase of private practice, those offices become the subject of ambition, and are sought after with great avidity by that class of men. In the great majority of cases the salary paid them as vestry clerks, does not include the performance of the legal business of the parish; but it is, nevertheless, almost invariably done by them in the character of solicitors, for which they make a separate and distinct charge, generally on a more extravagant scale than when they are employed by private persons. As they have, therefore, a direct pecuniary interest in multiplying cases of litigation, and fomenting instead of diminishing quarrels and disputes, that interest is obviously diametrically opposed to their duty, from which it offered so strong a temptation to swerve, that few men can be altogether capable of resisting, and is an ordeal which it is highly impolitic and unwise to subject them to. From that cause litigation is promoted in a great variety of ways, which it is difficult for the class of persons generally composing parochial boards or select vestries to detect and prevent. In addition to the chicanery of quibbling on points of law, it is, however, chiefly done by a careful and studied concealment of all the facts that have come to the knowledge of the opposing parties from each other, upon which a claim to a settlement may rest until they go into court, and which by a previous interchange of explanations would, in five cases out of six of the questions now tried, render appeals altogether unnecessary. Should it, therefore, be found impracticable immediately to introduce a system of management that will admit of the adoption of a general national assessment, a plan which I consider not only desirable for the purpose of superseding litigation, but on many other

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desirable to supersede
litigation.

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other grounds the most equitable and just, I should strongly recommend all parishes employing professional men as vestry clerks, to pay them salaries which would include the performance of the whole of the legal business without any separate charge.

I feel, indeed, perfectly satisfied that the chief reason why lawyers have so frequently been preferred to those situations, has arisen from a belief that they are the most competent persons to practise on the one hand, and detect on the other, those stratagems and deceptions attendant on the petty system of warfare kept up amongst the parishes, to shift the burdens upon one another otherwise I do not consider that the nature of their education and general habits render them the most eligible persons for the management of the poor, particularly where they also carry on a private practice, which most of them do; and the evil has been much aggravated by their having a direct individual interest in promoting litigation in the manner I have shown.

From a conviction of the truth and importance of this view of the case, strengthened by many local abuses and malversations that had arisen, the vestry of the parish of Saint Luke, at Easter 1827, after a violent struggle to overcome the long established influence of the vestry clerk, who was a professional man, and had held the situation 18 years, during which period he had realized a large fortune, succeeded in displacing him, and elected in his stead Mr. Wall, a non-professional gentleman, who has since filled the office. Mr. Wall has a disposition, capabilities and perseverance, which in an eminent degree qualify him for all the details of the office, the duties of which he invariably performs or superintends in person; and the result of his appointment puts an end to any doubt which might have been previously entertained, not only of the competency of a non-professional man to manage the affairs of a large and populous parish, but also of the decided advantages therefrom arising.

For the purpose of illustrating this fact more clearly, I subjoin a statement of the expense incurred by removals and appeals, compared with the general state of the parish during the six years from 1817 to 1823, in juxtaposition, with the six which have nearly elapsed since he came into office. I have selected those years in preference to the six immediately preceding the change, first, because the books were so imperfectly kept by the former vestry clerk before he left the office, that they do not furnish a correct return of the details; and secondly, because that from the year 1823 to 1826, the pressure upon the rate was less severely felt from the factitious stimulus given to trade by the state of the currency, and the spirit of speculation it infused.

I may further premise, that the plan we adopted and have invariably acted upon, is never to make a removal to another parish until we have made the fullest investigation into every accessible circumstance upon which we presume the claim of settlement to rest, every particular of which we transmit to the parties along with the order of removal, requesting them to correct us if from any misinformation or mis-statement we have committed an error. The same plan we adopt when we have reason to believe improper orders are made upon us, stating the grounds of such belief, and requesting explanation, and we never in any case avail ourselves of any legal technicality or informality to increase expenses to the other party. Unfortunately, however, for the reasons above assigned, we are frequently not met in a similar spirit, otherwise the expense of appeals might be reduced to a mere fraction of its present amount.

Procedure to avoid litigation.

YEARS from Easter to Easter.	Expense of Appeals.	Number of Bastards.	Number of Removals.	Number of Casual Reliefs.	Number of Pensioners.	Number in Workhouse; Annual Average.	Infant Poor Nursed out of Workhouse.	Number of Lunatics.
	£. s. d.							
1817-1818 -	356 9 10	20	152	7,855	512	623	43	14
1818-1819 -	422 2 8	39	149	7,071	516	576	55	10
1819-1820 -	352 4 5	37	115	7,427	565	553	55	14
1820-1821 -	299 6 5	34	143	8,023	567	558	55	16
1821-1822 -	309 9 6	38	134	8,179	583	511	53	18
1822-1823 -	258 7 7	48	94	10,112	589	509	45	19
Six Years' Average -	333 - - ½	36	130	8,112	554	555	51	15
1827-1828 -	51 16 2	46	140	29,220	780	625	47	24
1828-1829 -	67 1 5	61	145	29,780	772	633	62	24
1829-1830 -	131 6 7	67	182	34,860	752	627	60	23
1830-1831 -	68 14 3	56	156	40,540	783	613	52	20
1831-1832 -	86 1 2	64	142	45,040	803	640	46	22
Feb. 20 -	68 11 10	69	175	*	*	*	*	*
1832-1833 -								
Average -	78 18 6	60 ½	156	35,888	778	627	53	22 ½
Average of Six Years.				Average of Five Years.				

* Accounts not yet made up.

Population of the parish by the census of - { 1811 - - 32,445
1821 - - 40,876
1831 - - 46,700

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The salary paid the vestry clerk is 500*l.* per annum, and 100*l.* as clerk to the Board of Trustees for paving, lighting, &c. out of which he has to pay his assistant clerks. He draws all contract bonds, indentures, &c. without any charge to the parties or the parish; so that, in point of fact, more than the whole amount of his salary is saved from what was previously charged for legal business alone. It must also be observed, that the saving effected under the head of appeals ought to be multiplied by two, an equal amount of the expenses incurred always falling on the opposing parishes. The immense increase of the claims upon the parish, during the later period exhibited in the Table, must also be taken into account, partly arising from an increase in the population, but much more from the relatively depressed condition of the people, and a great influx of Irish casuals.

ST. MARY, ISLINGTON, (MIDDLESEX.)

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY	
	In-habited.	Unin-habited.	Build-ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males 20 Years of Age.	Expended on Relief of the POOR.	
1801	1,665	80	—	—	—	10,212	2,228	—		£.
1811	2,584	72	185	—	—	15,065	3,274	—	1776	1,125
1821	3,619	172	124	9,550	12,867	22,417	4,244	—	1785	1,936
1831	5,113	717	316	16,354	20,962	37,316	8,575	8,368	1803	6,226
AGRICULTURE.		1831.	MANUFACTURE.		1831.	All others not comprised in the two preceding Classes.		1831.	1815	9,235
No. of Families chiefly employed in Agriculture -		320	No. of Families chiefly employed in Trade, &c. -		4,784	No. of Families -		3,381	1821	9,904
Occupiers employ-ing Labourers -		13	Males 20 Years of Age, employed in Manufacture* -		174	Males 20 Years of Age, not Ser-vants, nor includ-ed in the two pre-ceding Classes -		781	1823	9,215
Occupiers not em-ploying Labourers		38	Ditto employed in Retail Trade -		3,366				1824	7,554
Labourers employ-ed in Agriculture, not 20 years of Age - - -		—	Capitalists, Bank-ers, &c. - - -		2,124	SERVANTS.			1825	10,070
			Labourers employ-ed in Labour not Agricultural -		1,335	Males 20 Years old -		217	1826	9,812
						— under 20 -		97	1827	11,212
						Females - - -		3,254	1828	14,762
									1829	14,338
									1830	17,015
									1831	15,517
									1832	16,191
REAL PROPERTY, Amount of, in - -				{ 1815 - - £. 103,457						
				{ 1828 - - 181,910						

he reports to the board on the merits of any application for relief of a permanent nature, or for indeterminate periods. When the applicant appears before the board, and has stated his claim, the relieving overseer states the result of his inquiry into the case. We are very seldom imposed upon. He makes inquiries not only at the residence of the parties, but of neighbours. Every three months all the pensioners are brought before the board, and interrogated as to their state and prospects. The parents are especially interrogated on the subject of the education of their children, and the children themselves are sometimes interrogated.

It is unquestionably a most beneficial principle which has been put in force for the last twenty years in our parish, that the same officers shall not have the receipt and payment of money, and that no money whatever shall be paid without a check, not a farthing. From what I have known, it is a dangerous thing that any officer should have the unchecked expenditure of parochial money; it is so easy, where three shillings have been paid to put down five as having been paid.

A most beneficial principle adopted, that those officers who receive, shall have nothing to do with the payment of money.

In the administration of relief to the able-bodied, our grand object is to get work for them, and not to give any money except as repayment for labour. We employ men all the year round in stone-breaking; others we employ in grinding wheat for flour. We have a mill which keeps twelve or fifteen men constantly employed. It sometimes costs us more (the grinding) than the wheat ground; but then it keeps numbers away, and in that way we save. When it became known that we could not get work for the whole of our able-bodied, we had in two or three days one-third more of this class of applicants, and unless we had been able to procure work of some sort, so as to keep the great body of the able-bodied employed, we should have been inundated with them. We find great difficulty in obtaining sufficient employment for all the applicants; this is the only way to keep them out; the harder the work the better. Numbers go away when they find they will have to work.

Importance of obtaining work for the able-bodied.

Work at a loss *per se*, profitable for the repression of pauperism.

Amongst the able-bodied labourers are many brick-makers, men who during seven or eight months in the year work hard, and obtain very high wages. They sometimes earn six, eight or ten pounds a week per gang. Some of these gangs are children. The adults will, I have been informed, earn from two to three, four or five pounds a week. The head of the gang, I am informed, often earns as much as five or six pounds per week. They drink much beer, and perhaps their labour requires it, but they might out of their wages wholly or in part make provision for the winter, if they were so inclined; but they spend all; they make no provision whatever for the winter, and when the weather sets in they throw themselves upon the parish as a customary thing. We have tried to make savings banks available against this course of improvidence, but without effect. Formerly, however, their wives have made small deposits in the savings banks to provide for their confinement or the payment of their rent in the winter unknown to their husbands. If their husbands knew they had the money, they would beat them to force it from them, and would then spend it improvidently. I was a member of the savings bank, and have seen the poor women bring their little pittances there. They have besought me to keep it secret from their husbands. The new regulation of the savings banks, that no money shall be received from a married woman, has put an end to this beneficial practice.

Characters of many of the able-bodied paupers.

Mischievous new regulations introduced into Savings Banks.

Do you think a legislative provision of this sort would be of service; that where a labourer of such a class had received relief during the slack season, and had been maintained at a weekly expense to the parish, the parish officers should have the power of issuing an order to the employer of that workman, when the period of work arrives, to reserve a weekly sum, say 4s. or 5s. a week, at the discretion of the parish officers, from the workman's wages, as repayment for the past expenditure of the parish?—I think that would be a very beneficial measure; the parish would have the money, instead of the public-house.

Do you think that if this class of men were by such a practice made sensible, that if they threw themselves upon the parish during the slack season, they would be obliged to repay the charge from their wages during the summer, they would be made more provident; providing of course, that if they absconded they would entirely disentitle themselves of all claim to future relief?—I have no doubt that it would be a very salutary measure as regards all classes of workmen.

Since I have been in office I have never had an examination for an order of removal sent back as imperfect, or with an adjudication that the settlement was bad. As far as any check goes, the signature of the order is a mere farce. It would save much money and much trouble, and would save the pauper from being kept in company, which is much worse, if removals were made entirely on the authority of the parish officers.

Removals might be made on the responsibility of parishes.

We are in the habit of making friendly orders, that is, investigating cases of settlement amicably and without litigation. We do this with St. Luke's, Clerkenwell, and Bethnal Green; but, in general, professional men will not come into this. They should in all cases be paid by salaries, and should be allowed no perquisites.

Vestry clerks, who are attorneys, ought to be paid by salaries.

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OBSERVATIONS of W. Benett, Esq.

"FROM the injurious practice of the overseers of some of the parishes in the district of Worship-street, and particularly of the parish of Shoreditch, of refusing to relieve their poor, many of whom are deserving characters and in immediate distress, without the intervention of the magistrates, great numbers of their paupers apply daily at the office for summonses; if they are asked whether they have been to the overseer, such reports are frequently made by them of the answers of one of them to their applications, and so offensive, as far as they regard the magistrates, that they are often obliged to check them in their replies; and this completely puts an end to all confidence of the magistrates in that overseer, who once gave such an answer to an officer of the establishment who was sent with a pauper and an order for immediate relief, which was not obeyed.

"I have known an instance of another overseer of Shoreditch, appearing before me at the office at Worship-street, and in the presence of 105 paupers, who were counted, when I remonstrated with him, and desired him to relieve such as were in real distress, and bring those he objected to before me, declaring that he cared not for me, or the law, and that he would not relieve one of them. I then proceeded to make an order in each individual case, when he stepped forward, and as each order was made, said, "I will relieve him," (or "her") and so continued throughout the whole number, converting by these means the magistrate into a relieving overseer, and the office into a vestry-room, and I did not finish this painful and unnecessary task till 11 o'clock that night.

"This evil still continues, though not to so great an extent, with the parishes of Shoreditch and St. Luke's, and on a Saturday night, the magistrate superintends the relieving the paupers at the office at Worship-street till 10, and frequently 11 o'clock. But this incivility and defiance proceeds almost solely from the overseer of Shoreditch, where the magistrates have occasionally been obliged on a Saturday night to direct the officer who takes the summonses or orders (when the overseer has not appeared at the office, which has been the case), to relieve the paupers out of his own pocket, as far as it would go, should the orders or summonses not be attended to, which has been done.

"That a more liberal and less vexatious way of relieving paupers may be adopted, is evident from the example of the parish of Bethnal-green, by far the most populous, and at the same time the poorest parish in the district of Worship-street, or perhaps in the metropolis; here we have very few paupers who apply for summonses, because the overseers visit and relieve their poor; and when they appear occasionally before the magistrate to answer the very few summonses which are granted, they are civil, respectful and satisfied with his decisions, which (as they have inquired into and they can report to him the cases) generally coincide with their own ideas and wishes. Here the magistrates place a confidence in the overseers*, and the paupers are generally satisfied."

With reference to the general subject of the Poor Laws, Mr. Benett stated:

"I believe that the first object to be sought in the amendment of the Poor Laws, is to reduce all expenses that can be dispensed with.

"In the first place, I should say, the law expenses.

"In the second, the expense of removing the paupers from one parish to another to their settlements.

"If these two could be abolished, I think there would be, on a rough calculation, a saving of one million a year, or one-eighth of the whole expense.

"In order to obtain this object, I should reduce all settlements to birth settlements; but when a woman married she should follow her husband's settlement during her husband's life-time, and all children who are supported by their parents should follow the parent's settlement. When they become independent, and compose no longer a part of that family, they should fall upon their birth settlement. To obtain a facility of proving the birth settlement, it should be incumbent on the father or mother, or aunt or next nearest relative, in case of the birth of a child in a parish, to send notice to the clergyman of the parish on the day when the child was born (under a penalty), which he should be required to enter into a book, with his signature attached; an affidavit of which entry before a magistrate of the county should be considered a sufficient proof of the birth settlement of the individual in question. When the pauper or paupers emigrate to another parish, and become chargeable, it should be incumbent on the overseers to warn the parish where the birth settlement is acquired, of the fact of their becoming chargeable, who shall at their own charges take the emigrants back, or if they refuse to return, the refusal shall be a disqualification for relief. But after the notice on the part of the parish where the emigrants have arrived, the parish where the birth settlement is acquired should be subject to all expenses of relief, or any other account.

"As to the quantity of relief, I should say, that you should give him no more than is sufficient to keep him in the ordinary health of a person in his condition of life. All beyond this is a bounty on improvidence or idleness; no pauper, by receiving parish relief, should be placed in a better situation than any man who supports himself. This observation I do not apply to the aged, to the infirm, or to children, who should (within reason) be comfortably provided for."

After Mr. Benett had sent in the preceding observations, and after he had been allowed to make further additions to them, he put in a claim to make still further observations as to the mode in which the inquiry had been conducted. I believe I suggested to him in answer to this claim, that as he admitted in the main the statements of the witnesses with relation

* It may be necessary to explain that this statement was made by Mr. Benett before the examinations of the parish officers of Bethnal-green had been read to him,—E. C.

relation to the practice at Worship-street in the administration of the Poor Laws, which he defended, any discussion as to the mode of collecting the admitted facts could scarcely be relevant; that it was the execution of his public functions and not mine which was proper object of discussion, and that even if he were acquainted with the mode of inquiry adopted under this Commission, he might not be competent to judge of it, inasmuch as he would naturally be biassed against any course of proceeding which he felt had ended unfavourably to himself. Having suggested thus much, I refrained from stating that I should not admit any further observations, if he should be still desirous of making them. He afterwards sent in the subjoined observations, which I trust I shall be excused by the Board for inserting, although I consider that the insertion of them is irregular.

"General STATEMENTS and OBSERVATIONS of *William Benett*, Esq. on the above REPORT, relating to the Administration of the Poor Laws in the District of Worship-street.

"As this Report, as far as it relates to the district of Worship-street, is headed 'that several witnesses made strong complaints respecting the administration of the Poor Laws by me,' I think that I am entitled to make some observations on the nature and effect of their evidence; and though I think that my answers inserted in the Report, are sufficient to convince any reasonable person of mistatements in many of the assertions contained in it, and the futility of others; yet a few general observations may here, perhaps, be requisite, as it is now finally laid before the public.

"In the first place I would remark, that the examination of the witnesses, (two of whom only, Mr. Heritage, the chief clerk, and Mr. Othen, the office-keeper, went from this office) did not take place in public before the Board, but in a private room before a single Commissioner, which is contrary to the usual practice in such cases."

Mr. Benett is in some degree mistaken, when he states that the examinations (meaning *all* the examinations) were made before "a single Commissioner." Mr. Codd, my colleague, who is a deputy lieutenant for the county of Middlesex, and one of the same bench of magistrates as Mr. Benett, was present at several of the examinations, and so I believe were one or two other assistant Commissioners. Mr. Codd took part in the examinations of two or three of the witnesses. Practically, however, the same advantages will generally be found derivable from such proceedings being conducted by a single Commissioner that are found to result from judicial proceedings being conducted by a single judge.

It may be proper to state, that at the outset of its proceedings the Board determined not to examine any witnesses, and to delegate the performance of that duty to the Assistant Commissioners, and to such of the Commissioners as chose to act separately.

Mr. Benett is misinformed as to what is the usual practice in such cases with relation to publicity. In general the practice in such cases has been to take the evidence in private; not from any especial determination upon the subject in one way or another (that I am aware); but simply because no appropriate places, or court keepers, or proper officers, have been provided to hold public courts for the examination of witnesses before an auditory, and because no instance occurred in which an investigation before an auditory was ever requested, or suggested as eligible. In a large proportion of cases, however, I consider that such a mode of investigation would have been ineligible; as a public examination could not have been held without giving notice, and affording opportunities and motives for preparation, which did not exist under the course pursued by myself and my colleagues when acting singly under this Commission. In general the workhouses were visited without a minute's notice; and where, as sometimes occurred, a parish officer was examined on the spot, he had no more time to consider in what way his evidence might affect his private interests.

In several cases where a large party in a parish was opposed to the parish officers, and accused them of malversation, it might have been desirable to hear the evidence of the accusing parties and the answers of the officers in public, had the time allotted to the Commission allowed. But for the reason before adverted to, I consider that this course of proceeding would rather have been productive of satisfaction to the parishioners at large, or to one or both of the contending parties, than of any valuable information beyond that already obtained.

"The whole evidence is *ex parte* and not on oath."

Here again Mr. Benett is misinformed. Several of the witnesses were sworn; but I consider that we administer the oath by far too frequently, and that this unnecessary use of the ceremony is productive of mischievous effects. Wherever I have exercised a discretionary power in such inquiries, it has certainly been my practice never to administer an oath, where it was not required for some special and cogent reason.

"The witnesses have a strong bias against the magistrates, which they have indulged in, by going out of their way to complain against them, and by stating irrelevant matter.

"A period of nearly fourteen years is referred to, and events are picked out of that time, without specifying a date, except in one instance, in Mr. Brushfield's evidence, where the date contradicts the fact stated.

"Opinions are stated as facts, and hearsay evidence as proof.

"There is much contradiction in the evidence, and perversion of terms, such as calling summonses, orders, &c.

"Most of the answers of the witnesses are given to leading questions; one of them, Mr. Coste's, answer to the Commissioner "that it was perfectly correct," was given to the evidence of Mr. Heritage and Mr. Othen, which was read over to him."

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It appears to me that the proper answer to these last general allegations is to refer to Mr. Benett's own answers, to show how few material contradictions he has made out; how small a proportion of the testimony he has shown to be irrelevant, and that he has nowhere proved the existence of an *undue* bias on the part of the witnesses, whose evidence, which it is not my business to defend, will be received, subject to all objections, *quantum valeat*. I must state, however, that they were all named to me as persons of good credit, and I saw nothing in their mode of giving testimony that was unsatisfactory. Nor did I think the contradictions of their evidence of sufficient importance to render it necessary to call upon them for any answers or further explanations. In two or three instances, on matters not of fact but of opinion, I think Mr. Benett's answers satisfactory.

Unless leading questions, both as to matters of fact and matters of opinion, were occasionally put to the witnesses under such an inquiry, much time and space would be consumed unnecessarily. It will have been observed that the evidence of one witness was frequently read to another for the contradiction or confirmation of the other witness. This is the ordinary course of proceedings in our courts of law, where it is put as a question to a witness who has been in court during the proceedings, "You have heard what the last witness has stated? Is it correct?" In the common mode the depositions of Mr. Heritage and Mr. Othen were read over to Mr. Coste, and he gave assent, not of course to the particular facts stated in illustration, but of the general allegations with respect to the practice at Worship-street.

"I was refused by the Commissioner to have Mr. Othen re-examined, whom I had brought to contradict some mistatements in the Report, and to confirm my own evidence, because, as the Commissioner answered, he had been examined before."

Mr. Benett is here in error. The circumstances were these: when he attended at the office of the Commission he stated that he had brought with him Mr. Othen, whom he tendered as a witness in general confirmation of his (Mr. Benett's) evidence, "if I thought proper to examine him." Mr. Benett was not then aware that Mr. Othen had been already examined. I read his examination to Mr. Benett, who manifested surprise and disappointment at thus finding that his own chosen witness had given evidence against him; but he did not in the first instance ask to have him examined in contradiction of any "mistatements" in "the Report," as the examinations of the witnesses are improperly called, nor did he ask that either this or any others of the witnesses might be re-examined. I could not unnecessarily place the witness in the painful position of having to repeat testimony disagreeable to his superior in his presence; and I did not think that Mr. Benett's testimony as to any material fact needed confirmation. The parish officers of Bethnal Green were mentioned by Mr. Benett as satisfied with the course pursued by the magistrates at Worship-street; but it became my duty to present to him in their order the examinations of those officers, in which they ascribed to that course an aggravation of their burthens. The case is a common one, where the magistrate is the last person who becomes acquainted with the opinions of those about him as to his proceedings.

"On such partial proceedings, and such insufficient, suspicious and illegal evidence, which could not be received in any court of justice in England, no one could, even if it were admitted on a trial, obtain a verdict of a farthing damages: how then can the motives, the discretion, or the judgment of a magistrate be even questioned on such slight and inadmissible evidence?"

"With regard to my mode of administering the Poor Laws, I have to observe, that I have followed the practice which has been adopted nearly 300 years, with very little variation, and which has been pursued by at least nineteen out of twenty magistrates throughout England. If the laws are bad, they should be repealed; but it is not just to require magistrates to set them aside, or to blame them for putting them into execution.

"In tracing the different statutes on the Poor Laws, it will be found that the great principle of granting relief is still, though with some modification, adhered to; for distress, though it proceed from unforeseen misfortunes, or from improvidence, or even from crime, must be relieved; but the manner or the quantity of that relief, so that it be sufficient, should be left to the overseers. Though the Act of 43 Elizabeth does not say that money shall be given, yet it ordains that work shall be obtained for the married and unmarried who are in distress, which is equivalent to money; and in cases where work cannot be got, it has been the common practice to give money, which has been incidentally mentioned by the Judges of the Court of King's Bench.

"No one is more willing than myself to admit that abuses have crept into the mode of administering the Poor Laws, and that an inquiry into it should be instituted; but that inquiry should be conducted with liberality and fairness, and faults should not be imputed to those who act conscientiously according to their oaths and according to the laws.

"Public Office, Worship-street, }
Monday, 24th March 1834. }

Wm. Benett."

As I shall again have occasion to notice the results of the practice of the magistrates in the Worship-street district, I shall pass over Mr. Benett's expression of opinion in his own case, and his allegations of the proceedings being *ex-parte*, when he has been so fully heard; and the evidence inadmissible and suspicious, when he admits and defends the general practice which is the main burthen of that evidence; I shall only observe here, that whatever I may think of his discretion, I entertain a very high opinion of the purity and benevolence

benevolence of his motives. He appears to be strongly impressed by the scenes of apparent distress which are brought before him, and he certainly spares no personal labour to obtain relief for those who are in real or apparent suffering. He appears to me to have had no temptations in the gain of popularity from his administration of the Poor Law. He stated to me, that when he was called upon to act on one occasion of the assemblage of a considerable number of the working classes within his district, he was stoned and severely maltreated by them. The working classes in the metropolis, however, do not generally identify themselves with the pauper class.

The assumed conformity of Mr. Benett's practice to the law has been examined by the Board, and the expression of their opinion in the general report will relieve me from the necessity of further adverting to that topic; neither is it necessary for me to say any thing upon the assumption, that in the distribution of relief by money, relief without a return of work, is equivalent to relief by work only. I again state my entire belief, that Mr. Benett, and the magistrates who act with him, do act most conscientiously according to their oaths, and according to their conception of what the law is. I have no doubt that Mr. Benett has been hitherto convinced that their course of action has been beneficial. When I stated to him that it was my intention to endeavour to ascertain the results of the practice pursued by Mr. Walker in the district of Lambeth-street, and to compare them with the results manifested in their district, he (Mr. Benett) spoke in terms of respect towards that magistrate, stated that he should like to see the comparison made, and appeared to entertain little fear that it would be to the disadvantage of the administration within the Worship-street district. I beg to defer any further observations until I submit the results of the comparison.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
LAMBETH-STREET
DISTRICT.

THE LAMBETH-STREET DISTRICT.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Osmond, Chief Clerk to the Magistrates at *Lambeth-street*.

At our office, the magistrates are not accustomed to order any relief to able-bodied poor. I have seen no marked consequence follow this refusal; no tumult; no instance of a person being refused, and afterwards brought before us for any act of delinquency; no instance of their having been found in a state of starvation. It is chiefly since Mr. Walker has been in office that the rule to refuse relief to the able-bodied has been uniformly adhered to.

It may be that about a fifth of our whole time is employed in parochial cases. I am not aware of any inconvenience which would result from orders of removal being made by parishes on their own responsibility. I have no doubt that there is sufficient available skill in the parishes within our district to make the removals without risk of material error; for in point of fact it is so already. I have no recollection of any case in which the magistrate considered the proof of settlement insufficient. I think that vestry clerks would be as careful as now, when their examinations are liable to the inspection of magistrates.

ST. MARY MATFELON, or WHITECHAPEL (MIDDLESEX.)

HOUSES, POPULATION, and EMPLOYMENTS.

Years.	HOUSES.			POPULATION.					MONEY Expended on Relief of the POOR.	
	In- habited.	Unin- habited.	Build- ing.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	No. of Families.	Males of 20 Years of Age.		
1801	3,497	192	—	—	—	23,666	6,141	—		£.
1811	3,902	82	38	—	—	27,578	6,946	—	1776	4,060
1821	4,254	283	29	14,394	15,013	29,407	7,418	—	1785	4,114
1831	4,149	363	3	14,933	15,800	30,733	7,268	8,862	1803	6,565
									1815	8,320
									1821	9,746
									1822	9,036
									1823	8,829
									1824	8,212
									1825	9,270
									1826	9,947
									1827	10,191
									1828	11,490
									1829	10,638
									1830	9,681
									1831	8,125
									1832	8,961

AGRICULTURE.		1831.	MANUFACTURE.		1831.	All others not com- prised in the two preceding Classes.		1831.
No. of Families chiefly employed in Agriculture -		7	No. of Families chiefly employed in Trade, &c. -		3,394	No. of Families -		3,867
Occupiers employ- ing Labourers -		—	Males 20 Years of Age, employed in Manufacture -		477	Males 20 Years of Age, not Ser- vants, nor includ- ed in the two pre- ceding Classes -		403
Occupiers not em- ploying Labourers		—	Ditto, employed in Retail Trade -		3,859	—		—
Labourers employ- ed in Agriculture, not 20 Years of Age -		—	Capitalists, Bank- ers, &c. -		531	SERVANTS.		—
		—	Labourers employ- ed in Labour not Agricultural -		3,531	Males 20 Years old — under 20 -		47 79
		—			—	Females -		942

Appendix (A.)

Reports,

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
LAMBETH-STREET
DISTRICT.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Robert Waite, Trustee of Whitechapel Parish.

I RETIRED from sea, in the merchant service, in the year 1810. From Lady-day 1828 to Lady-day 1829, and from Lady-day 1829 to Lady-day 1830, I served the office of overseer to the parish of Whitechapel; having no other business, I devoted my time chiefly to the parochial business; since then I have been made trustee of the parish.

When I first went into the parish I found in the workhouse a considerable number of able-bodied paupers, who, I thought, ought not to be maintained at the expense of the industrious. The number of in-door poor were increasing during the six years previous to my entrance into office. There were in the years 1822, 573; 1823, 639; 1824, 675; 1825, 722; 1826, 770; 1827, 857. Afterwards the numbers were in 1828, 714; 1829, 640; 1830, 488; 1831, 452; and 1832, 498.

Or the effects of the change of management may be shown by the following statement:—

In 1827, average number of persons in the workhouse, 846; at nurse, 78; total	-	918
1833, at present in the workhouse	- - - - -	453; at nurse, 12; total

Making a decrease between these periods of	-	-	-	453
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	£.	s.	d.
In 1827, the workhouse year's account was, as per quarterly bill	-	5,994	- 11
1833, the three-quarters have been paid, and the next quarter may			
be about the same average; the year will be	-	3,551	15 2

A difference of workhouse yearly account of	-	-	-	£.2,442	5	9
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The price of provisions being nearly the same at both periods; but the Cholera in 1832 cost us 1,400*l.* Last Lady-day we reduced the poor-rate three-pence in the pound, being 4*s.* 6*d.* including the police, and now 4*s.* 3*d.*; next year we look to a further decline. All these, I think, will sufficiently show the new system has been materially beneficial to our parish.

Amongst the in-door poor were a great number of young and able people, fit to go out either to labour or to service. Amongst the out-door poor were many able-bodied and some loose characters (several of whom have since been transported), who were receiving relief from the parish. On investigating the list of applicants for relief, I found it abounding in cases of imposition. I set to work to register the names alphabetically, with entries, 1. Of their ages and names; 2. Their number of children; 3. Their residence and the nature of their settlements. I kept this register of all such cases, which gave me a little trouble at first; but I soon found the benefit arising from it; it kept up a recollection of the cases, enabled me to detect numerous impostors, and saved me much time in constant inquiries. I was really astonished to see how easily this part of the overseer's business had been passed over; in short, it appeared to me, they thought it a merit in quickly getting through the business, rather than in making a strict and proper investigation into the different cases. When I came to search into these cases I discovered a number of impostors who had regularly come to our pay-table for relief (not belonging to the parish at all), and using no honest means to obtain a livelihood, going on the different pay-days to other parishes which do not pay at the same time, and by either palming stories of distress or false statements of their residences or settlements, obtaining a subsistence without exertion, apparently in the most abject distress and poverty, but living in constant habits of depravity. The facility with which they had been admitted to place themselves on the list of paupers on our parish, drew others, in great numbers, from all the other parishes round. Strange as it may appear, I yet was opposed in my system by some of our trustees, who had not had the opportunity of knowing so well the different cases I had sought out, and knew to be impostors. Some of those, whom they befriended, I find are again on the parish books; however, the better part of the parish duly appreciated my method, and notwithstanding the opposition made, I firmly and prudently persisted in the system, and reduced materially that part of the parish expenditure. Nine females were at one time recognized by the beadle of Mile-end, who were in the constant habit of being supplied at Mile-end, as well as at our parish; and we had three families, of which three generations at one time were receiving relief—mother, daughter and grand-daughter.

It should be here considered, there are many respectable poor from whom the rates are enforced by the arrear collector. Surely this money, so hardly wrung, should not be lavishly wasted on the undeserving, the idle, and dissolute.

If relief were not immediately granted to them, they went at once to Lambeth-street, which was close at hand, and they obtained summonses against the overseers to appear and show cause why they were not relieved. Summonses were usually given as a matter of course. One day I received fifteen summonses. An overseer cannot, usually, even in one case, get up evidence to disprove the statement of an applicant, however unworthy the character of that applicant may be, or however satisfactory may be the reasons which the parish officer has for rejecting the application. A large proportion of the applicants were well-known vagrants from other counties. How could we ascertain their past circumstances in order to disprove their statements before the magistrates? For although we might detect their impostures at the board, yet they always went before the magistrates prepared with their stories. Thus, in examining cases of vagrancy at the board, we often found that they

Out-door poor; method of investigating their cases.

Course of Paupers to enforce exorbitant demands.

they gave false descriptions of their routes, and told such contradictory stories as proved that they were impostors. One frequent story with paupers pretending to have come up the road was, that they had that morning come from Chelmsford. I made inquiries about the local peculiarities of these places, and would ask the vagrants (if they said they came from Chelmsford), whether they came over any bridge from that town? They frequently replied, that there was no bridge. There is one stone bridge and one wooden bridge at Chelmsford. We have asked them how many churches there were in Chelmsford? Sometimes they would say there was not one, and at other times they would guess it at two or three: the fact was, there was one church. By questions of this description we soon learned whether they were impostors or not. The impostor, when foiled at the board, went amongst the crowd of other vagrants, and was sure to find some one who knew the place, and gave him minute information. He immediately availed himself of the instrumentality of the magistrate, and obtained a summons against the parish officer for refusing to give relief. When before the magistrate, the applicant would be so perfect in his tale as to baffle any skill the parish officer might have, and would make out his case to the satisfaction of the magistrate. Usually they "explained" away the discrepancies of their previous stories, or stoutly denied that they had previously told the story reported by the parish officers. In order to have met them, it would have been requisite to have instructed a counsel in almost every case; and even then some of the well-practised vagrants were so acute, that I believe they would have baffled any counsel. I may adduce an instance, to show the aptitude of the vagrants and paupers in making use of information and getting up stories. One woman, named Mary Shave, the mother of a bastard child, being refused her "pension," went to the police-office, and obtained a summons; whilst waiting at the office door, she related her tale to the vagrants in waiting. When the case was called on, a woman made her appearance as Mary Shave; I thought she was not the woman whom I had seen before: I said, "Are you Mary Shave?" "Yes," she said, "she was *the* Mary Shave, who had the misfortune to be the mother of a natural child, and who had been ill-used by the parish officers;" and she made out a circumstantial case clearly to the satisfaction of the magistrates, who ordered her relief, which was immediately given to her. Soon afterwards, the real Mary Shave appeared and substantiated her claim, and she was relieved. The other had made off with the money.

Vagrant's stories,
how examined.

Aptitude in getting
up stories.

Instance of.

How much did the first or pretended Mary Shave obtain by the fraud committed before the magistrate?—One shilling and four-pence.

Could she have had a larger sum in prospect?—Not more than 2s. 6d.

A few minutes after this second or real Mary Shave had been paid, a third woman made her appearance for the first time, and begged an order for relief from the magistrate; she said her name too was Mary Shave; she was the mother of the original Mary Shave; and she too, on making a good story, obtained relief, having been incited by the ease with which her daughter had succeeded. The entry of this last woman's character is in the following terms:—"Mary Shave, the mother: a widow, aged 36, a notorious impostor; receives from several other parishes, and finds out every charitable institution, and has two children left in the workhouse: she was sent to Clekenwell by the former overseer." Mary Shave, the daughter, was an able-bodied woman, but a bad character, and had been dismissed by the magistrates several times, until she had a bastard child, and then she fixed herself upon the parish. These I adduce as instances of the sort of impositions which, though detected and defeated before the board, unavoidably succeeded before the magistrates. These characters, males and females, at the office doors were often so clamorous and desperate, that it became necessary to let me out from the police office by the private door. I have been pursued by them through the streets, and obliged to seek shelter in shops. During twenty-seven years at sea, I encountered many perils in the waves, but these never hurt my mind so much as apparent perils amongst paupers. Had this system gone on, the expenses of our parish must have materially increased, notwithstanding the utmost labour that I or any other officer could have bestowed.

Fortunately for our parish, and probably for the other parishes in the district, a different system was soon after adopted at Lambeth-street police office. The parochial business of the office being left to Mr. Walker, and he having determined not to receive any appeals from the decisions of the parish officers, who were the best acquainted with the circumstances of the paupers, we got rid of a number of this sort of cases, when we found that they were cases of imposture.

Had you any riots or any disturbances, when the poor were thus left wholly at the mercy of the parish officers?—No; not so many riots by far as we had before the alteration. Formerly the paupers of the worst class were accustomed to swear at us when we refused them relief, and would say that they would have us before our masters, and compel us to relieve them. I had my windows broken several times, and was constantly threatened and annoyed at my doors. Since the appeal to the magistrates is altered, we find the parish materially benefited, and that there is less bad behaviour on the part of the paupers.

More order after
than before the al-
teration.

Did the independent people of the labouring classes, those who might become chargeable, manifest any sympathy with the paupers, or evince any disposition to rise for their protection?—None whatever: they appeared to be perfectly satisfied with the proceedings of the parish officers. I received more praise from independent labourers than from any other classes.

From the experience of the change made in your parish, do you believe that such a change might be made without danger in the general administration of the Poor Laws, and the decision of a select vestry made final throughout the kingdom?—Judging from our own

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

Independent La-
bourers took no
part with paupers.

experience, and from my observation of other town parishes, I have no doubt whatever that the alteration might be made without the slightest danger in towns, but my knowledge of the agricultural districts is not such as to enable me to say what might be the result of the alteration in those districts; though the course taken by some of the country magistrates, as shown in their decisions, certainly appears to me most extraordinary.

Did charges of oppression, of cruelty, or hard-heartedness, increase when the final decision was left with the board of parish officers?—No: on the contrary, they decreased.

Did the paupers go in the way of appeal to the independent and labouring classes?—No; or if they did go, the independent labourers paid no attention to them, for we rarely or never heard any complaints from them of the paupers' treatment. They did not interest themselves in it.

Were not those complaints from the independent labourers more frequent after than before the alteration?—No: the complaints of all sorts were less than before, as it was notorious that the parish generally was in a better state. We had much less crime in the parish, though the new police (which I think one of the greatest improvements ever established) has, no doubt, greatly contributed to this: but still the old system attracted vagabonds to the parish, who have now left us, and kept many in idleness, which led to pilfering. Some of these people I now see at work in the parish; the change, I am sure, has benefited the people themselves, for they would commonly spend two or three hours to get a sixpence in charity rather than give an hour's labour to obtain the same sixpence.

What number of undeserving cases did you get rid of in consequence of this alteration, and of your investigations?—About one hundred and fifty, as an immediate consequence of this alteration, but, altogether, including the clearing of the workhouse, (with which the magistrates had nothing to do,) we got rid of about five hundred in the course of two years.

If all the other parish officers had the same leisure as yourself, do you think that they would go through what you consider the requisite labour?—Some of them are personally incapacitated. One of them, for example, is a very lusty man, and he could hardly be expected to bustle about to investigate pauper cases throughout the parish. Nor has each man the same energy of disposition.

Jealousies of the other
officers excited by the
reductions witness had
made.

Whilst you were an overseer, were you cordially assisted by the other parish officers; were there no jealousies at your activity?—The first year the gentlemen who were with me, in some measure depended more upon my exertions; but the officers of the second year were certainly less cordial, by which less advantage was obtained to the parish than otherwise might have been. There were some jealousies manifested at the reductions which I had occasioned.

Permanent paid
officers would be the
best; but men of no
ability get put into
office from motives of
humanity.

Have you formed any opinion as to the expediency of appointing a permanent paid overseer, or other paid officer for the transaction of parochial business?—Undoubtedly if the officer was well chosen and had an adequate salary, or such a respectable salary as would save him from temptation, it would be a great saving to parishes. But the great difficulty is in getting a fit man. Canvassers take up the cases of distressed persons; they go about and say, "Vote for our candidate, he's got a wife and a large family, he is very much distressed and is in want of a situation." By such means a man of no ability is commonly got into office to the exclusion of a man of ability. And then the parish is fixed with his want of ability during his whole life, and moreover, you have to pay his salary; so that in this case we lose more than we get by unpaid services, if the choice is injudicious.

Mode of employing
the able-bodied
labourers in the
parish.

Have you any labour for the able-bodied paupers of your parish?—Yes, they are always employed in the house. We never employ the out-door paupers, but relieve them at a low rate, and expect them to find employment for themselves.

Out-door employment.

What sort of work have they in the workhouse?—They have various sorts of work in the workhouse. Out of the workhouse we employ them as general scavengers for cleansing the parish, contracting for carting only, and making the paupers cleanse all the lanes, alleys and streets, and fill the carts, giving them a small allowance.

What has been the effect of this regulation?—It had been in operation some years before I came into office, and has been found very beneficial. The parish is much better cleansed, and is more healthy if left to contractors only. The contractors generally shuffle off cleansing the alleys as they cannot get the cart up them, but we make our men take the wheelbarrows up the avenues. The paupers are by this system made spies to prevent any nuisances that may occasion them trouble. If they see any one throwing down filth, they fetch the superintendant and the party is made to take it up again. For this purpose we find that the paupers are better than the police. The efficiency of this system depends mainly on the superintendant, who is paid to attend to the labour of the paupers. The parish was fortunate in making choice of a proper officer.

Do you think such application might be made of the pauper labour in other parishes?—In Limehouse and some adjacent parishes the same practice pervades. You may almost see it in walking through the parishes, where the roads and channels are kept cleaner. Certainly the labour might be applied elsewhere in the same way.

Dieteries of Work-
houses, the cause of
disturbance.

In your answer to the circular queries forwarded to you, you have stated that "It would prevent frequent disorders arising amongst paupers generally, by their being dissatisfied with the quantity of provisions, if there was one certain and general scale to be attended to in every workhouse in the kingdom. The present scale of diet in Whitechapel workhouse is greater than that of the diet supplied to His Majesty's troops when embarked on board transports. And considering that a large proportion of the inmates of the workhouse are old and infirm, they cannot need so much as the troops. The scale of diet being

authorized

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authorized by law, would prevent quarrels in workhouses." Will you explain this subject further. To what extent is the diet dissimilar?—The women have only two-thirds of the soldiers, and the children one-half of the women's diet; but in our workhouse men, women and grown-up children all have alike.

If a regular diet table were prescribed by authority, the same as is prescribed to the troops, the burthen of altering the diet would be taken from the parish officers. The effect would be, that the paupers would be less generally discontented than they now are, knowing that the scale had been laid down by high authority. They would not then have to complain that other parishes treated them better. They would not move about so much as they now do, and in various ways there would be a great saving.

Might not the parishes agree amongst themselves about one scale of diet?—I see no chance of it. The recommendation would, amongst the parishes, be deemed officious. They would say to the party making the application, "We know how to manage our poor ourselves; we do not want your interference."

Here is a difficulty we have much to encounter with to get the young ones off our hands, either as apprentices or servants; the expenses being now considerably increased by a competition among the parishes who can afford to give the highest premiums or indulgences to get them off. During the war there was much less difficulty and considerably less expense. We have about twenty-five young persons fit to go out, but by all the exertions of the overseers they cannot find means to get them off. The elder boys we send out to labour at winding, cotton-braiding, &c. at a low rate of wages; but at their age it unfortunately fixes them too much in familiar habits of pauperism. During the last six years we have got several off to fishermen at Greenwich and Barking, but that source now fails us, the fishermen have so many offers from private families. I know from my own experience at sea, during the period of the last war, we never would take an apprentice (though so much wanted) from workhouses if we could get them from private families at country places in the north. I have had about a dozen boys from the Greenwich schools, and I think only about two have turned out steady hands. The boys now abound in all parts; at the Schools, Marine Society, Refuge for the Destitute, and in all the parishes. We have constant complaints from private individuals, stating that as the parishes gave high premiums, they as private individuals have not the means of getting their children off, which brings them again to find means to get them into a workhouse to effect that purpose. These then must accumulate if some other means are not adopted to get them off.

Emigration offers a source which, I submit, opens a field for very material assistance to every parish in the kingdom, if it was brought under a good and systematic regulation. On the Sunday, when all our workhouse inmates assemble in the hall to dinner, to see about eighty boys and girls, from the age of six to fifteen, all in perfect health, volunteer to go to any of our settlements as apprentices or servants to the fixed settlers, is matter of great regret to me. I know of no set of persons so suitable, so desirable, or who would so readily be taken immediately off hand, say at New South Wales, Swan River, Canada, Prince Edward's Island, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Cape of Good Hope, or even the West Indies, if the emancipation of the blacks takes place. Going there young, they would become natives of the soil, accustomed to the country and situation, knowing no other home, and would be gladly encouraged by the settlers, and the only set of servants that could be relied on. At New South Wales and Swan River, the whale fishery and their increase of vessels makes it very difficult to obtain men for that service. Apprentices, who would be much the most useful for their purposes, they cannot obtain; and now at New South Wales, it is one of the most glaring means of the desertion of convicts from thence, encouragement being given (under the rose) by the captains of vessels from necessity, because other hands cannot be obtained.

If the legislature could assist us in emigration, it would be highly desirable. I am the manager of two ships in the Quebec trade, which have for this last four years regularly taken emigrants from Bridgewater, who were encouraged and greatly assisted by the Marquis of Bath. All the information from them has been favourable.

The system of bastardy, as it now stands, we find works worse and worse; the amount of our unpaid arrears for the last five years is 616*l.*, which is from those who could not afford to pay a composition at the first. The effect of the female having secured her claim is, that she will not give information respecting the man. Such relief, at an early age, dooms her as a pauper for seven years. To compel the man to find from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* per week drives him away from his trade, however well he may be settled. If he is sent to prison for the arrears, it eventually ruins him. A new legislative enactment on this head is therefore highly desirable.

Mr. Waite was afterwards re-examined, when he stated,—

In reading the evidence in the book of extracts, I have been struck with the heavy increase of pressure on some of the agricultural parishes in comparison with close town parishes like ours; for instance, Lenham and Eastbourne, in Kent. Lenham has 2,100 souls, 6,423*l.* rental, with the weekly pay last winter of 90*l.* per week, and now 50*l.* per week. Whitechapel, with 32,000 souls, weekly pay to pensioners, casuals, illegitimates, nurses and all occasional out-door paupers about 50*l.* per week. If this parish was near the above incumbrance, it could not possibly bear it; and I will venture to predict the first town parish that grants an allowance on the scale system, however small the allowance, will inevitably be ruined. The certainty of receiving a sum (as in our pension list) we find fastens to the place those who receive it, and prevents them from looking for a method of maintenance in any other part. In that case the law of settlement is highly injurious.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.*Dietary should be pre-
scribed by one autho-
rity.**No chance of agree-
ment amongst parishes.**Difficulty in pro-
viding for pauper
children.**Expediency of emigra-
tion for parishes.*

Bastardy.

Equalization of rates desirable.

If the legislature should choose to alter the law of settlement, and relieve us from the grievous expenses of appeals, the burthen of rates equally born (without particular injury) by every parish throughout the kingdom, according to its rental, it would be of no consequence in which parish the charge is made, on proof only of being a denizen of this country; but the heavy parish debts, in such parishes as Bethnal-green, would be difficult to encounter, and I do not see that they are noticed in any part of the evidence.

Dangerous to make sudden or sweeping changes.

From all the minutiae I have entered into, as well as from the previous examination, weighing the system in all its branches so far as I am acquainted with it, and if I might be allowed an opinion I should venture to say, that as the laws relating to the poor are of so long standing, and the practice fixed in the habits of many of the labouring classes, that it would be dangerous to make too sudden a change; but I think that for the present the following measure would remedy much of the abuses, so far as I observe them, in the closer town parishes, and particularly in our district. The parishes at the east end of London, or as many as might be convenient, should be incorporated into one district, with one or more superior controlling officers, well acquainted, of firm energetic mind, should have authority to sit at any parish board in such district, to search into the practice, and offer, in the first instance, such changes and regulations as they might deem necessary to each board; and for the event of its requiring stronger measures, a central board should be established to appeal to. One diet table should be established for the district, and this should be regulated by the central board. Some scale of premium to apprentices, to prevent competition between parishes should be fixed. A system of friendly order of removals throughout, so far as the settlement could be ascertained, should be established. These officers should attend one day at each of the parish relief boards in rotation. The central board should command one day as the pay-day of each parish, to prevent a pauper going to different boards.

Incorporation of Parishes and central control.

In the agricultural parishes, where it could be done likewise, several parishes should be incorporated; and where there is one workhouse, one medical man and one set of officers for the whole, would materially lessen the expenses of the appointment. On no account should money be given for relief, but such articles alone as may be necessary for subsistence. This would in some measure prevent their congregating at beer-houses. The officers should regulate and judge of such as ought to have relief, or be passed to Ireland or Scotland, without the appeal to magistrates. As it would require considerable time to alter the laws in all the details where alterations would be necessary, the central board should have power gradually to make such alterations in details as in their wisdom might seem necessary.

Central Board should have power to alter Bye-laws.

MILE-END OLD TOWN, (MIDDLESEX.)

	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population - -	9,848	14,465	22,876	33,898

	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor	£. 2,944	£. 4,054	£. 7,625	£. 8,314	£. 13,919	£. 12,039

EXAMINATION of Mr. Thomas Single, Builder, White Horse Lane, Mile-end Old Town.

I have resided in this parish about 20 years. During the last 14 or 15 years, I have paid much attention to parochial management. In 1824, I published a pamphlet, Hints to Parliament, for a general Act to prevent parochial squabbles, and for a reduction of one-half of the poor's-rates, and to better the condition of the poor. In 1828, I was overseer of the parish, and in 1832, churchwarden.

Management by an open vestry.

The parish is managed by an open vestry; there are from 15 to 20 vestries in the year. The attendances of all rate payers is from 100 to 500.

There appear to be 10,000 houses in your parish; what is the number of rate-payers?—From 4,000 to 5,000.

What are the descriptions of persons who usually attend the vestries?—Generally the smaller rate payers.

Are the vestry meetings generally peaceable or tumultuous?—Generally tumultuous.

Are there any distinct parties amongst the vestrymen?—Yes.

Parish parties.

Will you describe each of them?—Eleven years back the vestry meetings were very small; sometimes the number in attendance was not sufficient to make a vestry, and have sent out to ask one or two to come in. At that time the rates were from 6d. to 7d. in the pound, quarterly. One of the then officers who had been for some years the surveyor of bye-roads, was suspected and charged with embezzling the parish money. His friends thought these charges could not be substantiated, and they mustered in great numbers at the vestry to oppose those who, they conceived, had made some unfair charges. However,

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ever, the result was, that he was sent to prison. From that time the town meetings have always been large and noisy, and conducted with much party spirit.

The high party finding themselves generally out-voted, attempted to get a Select Vestry Bill. A club was formed, I think, called The Mile-end Union, for the purpose (as it is stated), of watching the interest of the hamlet, and opposing the select vestrymen. They met at different public-houses, and held meetings, one of which was always the night previous to a vestry meeting. Generally at these meetings they agreed to resolutions, and with these in their pockets they would all go to the vestry, pledged to support no other resolutions than those which they had agreed to at their club meetings. From this party sprung out another, called, I believe, The Protectors; so that we have had for some years at least three parties, and there has been kept up a violent party spirit. There have been four or five law suits going on at one time. Law suits against officers, and officers having law suits against others who had just gone out of office. The magistrates generally placed overseers and bye-road surveyors in office who were on the side of the high party, and who were never elected at the vestry meetings. I believe that this interference has kept alive this party feeling much longer than it would have been, if there had been no such power to disannul the decision of vestry meetings.

Which party has subsequently been predominant?—The low party.

Of which party are you considered?—Of neither party; I have been supported by both.

Have the appointments to offices been made by the high or by the low party?—By the low party, except where the magistrates have the right of appointment.

What, in your opinion, has been the usual character of the appointments?—I think the persons who have been placed in office by the magistrates have not generally been so fit as those who have been selected by the vestry. This year and last year we have had good surveyors of the roads appointed, but otherwise I do not recollect an instance of any well-qualified individual having been appointed. From the present feeling in the parish respectable individuals will seldom attend and accept office.

Fit persons not generally placed in office by the Magistrates.

Has there been any improvement of late in the parochial management?—None whatever, that can be said to be material.

Have any definite plans of improvement been brought forward by what is called the low party?—I do not know of any, nor do I think it possible to make any improvement whilst there is so much party spirit existing.

Have these contentions, however, reduced the rates?—No; during these disturbances, as I call them, the rates have increased from 6d. in the pound to 1s. 6d. quarterly. In not one of the surrounding parishes have the rates increased in the same degree; although the population and the number of working people have increased as much in the same proportion as in our hamlet.

Do you believe then that they cared about the reduction of the rates?—I have given my opinions of parish factions in my pamphlet.

“Oppositions and contentions in parishes are oftener occasioned by personal enmity and the petty jealousies which too frequently arise among neighbours, than from a feeling of philanthropy. Consequently a parish gets thrown out of order, and incurs heavy expenses occasioned by the envious passions of perhaps two or three arbitrary overbearing individuals.”

Character of parochial contests.

“In parish squabbles it generally happens that two or three of the most opulent men are engaged, or at least are the promoters or prompters. There are always one or two on each side who are considered to be the great and grand movers. Hence we may infer that self-interest, pride or vanity, prompts them on to wish for an absolute and uncontrolled power.”

“The love of victory and the desire to rule naturally tends to stimulate these contentions; hence two parties arise. The influence a rich man has over the poor is exercised to gain them on his side. His pretension is, that of reforming parish abuses; when, in reality, it may only be ambition and personal spleen on his part which he wishes to gratify. In nine cases out of every ten these will be found to be the principal motives which actuate the rich and leading men of every parish in which there are contentions. These contentions are, in fact, civil wars carried on, equally the same in principle, and springing from the same source as those which existed in the dark ages when civilization was in its infancy, with only this difference: *then* it was a physical war, decided by personal strength; *now* it is a property war, decided, in a great measure, by the strongest purse. These contentions produce law suits, expenses, high rates, and these fall heavy on the poorest tax-paying persons, and have a tendency to produce distress and starvation to their families.”

Common objects of the contending parties.

What has been the character of your overseers?—We have had men in office, generally, who are not fit, and who have been very negligent in attending to the duties. I think there is not one man in a thousand qualified to fill the office of overseer, although every one thinks he is. The duties in a large hamlet like ours are so great, that it would require the whole of a clever man's time, and would be a very irksome and arduous task to perform. There are very few men, who are at all fit for the office, who would be willing to make such a sacrifice of their time and ability without some reward. Instead of which, they feel certain of censure, and their motives, however pure, are always suspected. It is very rare that any one from the more respectable classes of tradesfolk will fill the office.

Have you not tried permanent overseers?—Yes; but without success. A permanent and paid overseer could not manage the parish affairs better than they are now, unless his power was superior and his place independent of the unpaid overseers. He would, perhaps, be appointed on account of his superior knowledge; but if he is to act under the directions of another of no experience, his knowledge can be of very little utility, he becomes a mere tool in the hands of an unskilful workman. Where there are three or four overseers or churchwardens, or any other person who has power to give relief, the pauper who cannot obtain his wishes from one, goes to the other, and so on until he tries them all; and he

A permanent overseer should be independent of the annual officers.

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*The system of
Mr. Walker had
produced no material
effect on the condition
of the parish.*

*Previous practice of
the magistrates.*

is almost sure to succeed from one or the other. The kind hearted man hears their tale, and he would sooner give a trifle than take any trouble to inquire into the facts.

What influence has the new system of administration adopted in Lambeth-street at the instance of Mr. Walker the magistrate, had upon the general condition of your parish?—No material effect; this I attribute to our having had overseers who have been negligent in their duties, and liberal in giving reliefs, without taking the necessary trouble in examining into the cases of the persons applying for relief. I must, however, say, that with these same overseers the mischiefs and the increase of pauperism would have been much greater, had the former system of administering the Poor Laws continued in force at Lambeth-street. When I was in office the magistrates invariably took the part of paupers, and on one occasion it was only by perseverance that I could get a charge attended to against some paupers, for attempting to set fire to the workhouse.

Before Mr. Walker came to the police-office in Lambeth-street, the magistrates used to side, generally, with the paupers. We have had (and it used to be very common to have), six or seven summonses a day to attend the office. Some of the paupers would go up and get a summons before they had applied to us for relief; others would try it on by threatening us with a summons, thinking we should be inclined to give something in addition to what we were then paying them, rather than have the trouble and loss of time in attending the office. The number which applied were so great, that I am sure if the magistrates at that time had taken all the necessary pains to make themselves acquainted with each case, these cases alone would have occupied the whole of their time every day.

How did the magistrates deal with the refractory?—We have frequently taken up the refractory inmates of the workhouse for their riotous conduct. On one occasion it was for smashing in all the windows of the committee-room, while the committee were sitting; at another time, for smashing the windows of the overseer's house, and for such offences. I recollect one time, five or six girls causing great disturbance in the house, and swearing they would burn down the place. They set fire to some picked oakum, and threw it a light under the beds, and under one where a poor woman bed-ridden was lying; some part of the bedstead and floor was burnt; and on that occasion so loosely did the magistrates examine the parties, that twice they dismissed them, and on the third time I went up, and with some difficulty and a little altercation with the magistrates, they were induced to make the necessary inquiry of the witnesses. The punishment of these and such other offences of insubordination was never more than a few weeks imprisonment in the House of Correction. We had several in the workhouse who had been many times committed, and when they came back they were more turbulent than before. Since Mr. Walker has been at the office the overseers very seldom have a summons, and the paupers seem more satisfied now than before. I am sure they get just as much now, and more, than when they made the applications so repeatedly to the magistrates.

Where there is two authorities where the poor can make their appeal to, many will apply to them both, and if the magistrates and overseers are at variance in their opinion, the paupers are sure in the end to be the sufferers—I have not known an instance where the overseers have refused relief if they have known it to be really wanting.

*Effects of attempts to
give relief according
to character.*

Do the parish officers succeed in giving satisfaction in giving relief according to their notions of the characters of the applicants?—I find the poor more dissatisfied in the manner in which the relief is distributed than in any thing else. They know better than we the circumstances and characters of the persons applying, and they invariably say, that those who are in the least need of it, and who least deserve it, get the most. The most profligate and worst of characters are the most miserable in their outward appearance, and the most clamorous and pressing in their demands, consequently generally get the best off. The sober and careful, who in reality are in great distress, are always less clamorous, less pressing, and more easily driven away, therefore they come worse off, and it is from this cause there is much discontent. This is where great judgment is requisite, and discrimination, and a very particular inquiry into every one's situation before anything like justice can be done to all parties.

Bastardy.

What is the state of your parish in respect of bastardy?—I have known girls come to the workhouse, and lay-in; go out again, and in 12 months return to lay-in again, and so on for five or six years. One woman will bring on us four or five bastards. There are some who have four or five bastards that receive money from different parishes; perhaps from one parish 2s. 6d. per week, from another 3s., and another 4s., besides what she picks up from the different fathers; so that some of these women are really better off by having bastards than if they were single, and much better than most of the married poor.

What are your opinions as to the remedies for this state of things?—I think a girl brought to the house to lay-in should have the sole care of her child, and not be allowed to leave it or the house for two years, except she could give up all claim, and do without parish assistance; and those who lay-in out of the house should, at the expiration of two years, give up their child to the parish authorities, and if the parish had not the child in their keeping, it should not be bound to any weekly payments. Bastard children is an enormous expense on the parish, and it requires protection against these great expenses, occasioned by the vicious habits of individuals: they alone should feel the ill effects of their misdeeds, and not the parish.

Officers should not be allowed to take any sum, and exonerate the father. They are oftentimes partial; take from 5l. to 50l. If a man were always compelled to pay so much weekly until the child was a certain age, men would act a great deal more cautious than they do now; and there might be cases where they should be compelled to give sureties. There is much lost by negligence on the part of overseers in seeking after, and in not enforcing

enforcing the weekly payments. Men think it no crime to evade this payment, nor no disgrace to be sent to prison—therefore no credit should be given. It frequently happens that many weeks and months elapse before an application is made, and then the amount is more than they can pay. They are then either sent to prison, or the claim is given up, or a small sum is taken, and they are completely released from all future claim; but in three cases out of every four the burthen of the bastard falls wholly on the parish.

Are there any other points on which you would offer suggestions?—A parish apprentice should gain no new settlement from his apprenticeship. The object of overseers is to get rid of the boy, to find a master in another parish. They seldom take any trouble to inquire into the character of the master who applies for one, nor never after make any inquiry about the lad after he is gone, they have got him off the parish, and they think they have gained something; but as other parishes do the same, nothing is gained: we have only placed ours on some other parish, and in return have got another one placed on ours. I have known many instances where the masters having obtained the first part of the premium then turned them adrift. It is a very rare instance now for a respectable, or even a decent tradesman to take a parish apprentice, consequently the poor boys get badly used, and badly brought up.

Parish money ought not to be expended in apprenticing workhouse boys to trades: they ought not to be placed in a better situation than labouring men's children are, for if they cannot prentice their sons to trades, and the parish does workhouse boys, it is then to the interest of every poor man, and may act as an inducement to parents, to put their children into the poor-houses. This is giving encouragement to pauperism.

My general views are set forth in my pamphlet, intituled, "Hints to Parliament for a general Act to prevent parochial Squabbles; for a reduction of one-half of the Poor Rate, and to better the condition of the Poor."

"Poor relief should extend no further than to the orphan and the aged, the lame, and the sick. Those who are able to work should have no claim on the public purse, but should depend on the charity of those who are inclined to give.

"Some tender-hearted public charity subscriber may exclaim, Good God! then how frequently shall we see an industrious man, who cannot get employment, his wife and his children starving; because it will frequently happen that there is not always a sufficiency of labour to do. If any one should entertain such a belief, to such person I would say, bring the case home to yourself; examine yourself upon it. Suppose a case, that an industrious labourer with a large family were living close to your own home, and that you knew the children were crying for bread, owing to the man being out of employment, would you not give them relief rather than see them die for want? And would you not derive a great pleasure from having given them bread to eat? And would you not interest yourself on their behalf amongst your friends and connections, to get him employment? Now if you, under such circumstances as these, would do all this, is it not natural and reasonable to suppose that every other person would do the same? We know that *pity* prompts us to relieve obvious distresses, and the *sharpness of want* urges men to labour.

"To say at once to the strong and healthy, 'If you cannot live by your labour you may starve; you shall have no legal claim on the purse or property of another,' seems at the first blush to be inhuman and unfeeling: but if we examine human nature, we shall find that we oftentimes deceive ourselves by contentedly submitting to the first impression on the mind. By a mistaken idea of kindness we frequently do great injury to the person to whom we wish to do good. A parent's fondness for a child oftentimes ruins it. An anxious care over its conduct in a more advanced stage of life frequently is the cause that many are unfit for the world. By taking so much care of the conduct of the child, it feels the less necessity of taking care for itself. Too much care and anxiety to provide for children against want makes them (generally speaking) improvident, bad children, and bad members of society.

"How common it is for those children who have parents that can, and are always ready to supply their wants, to be indolent, careless, and wasteful; and on the contrary, when men know that they have no dependence but on their own exertions, how much more industrious, attentive, and frugal they will be?

"Precisely the same effect have the Poor Laws on society. They tend to make the lower classes drunken, idle and improvident. When a man knows that he can demand of the parish, as his right, a sufficiency to support his family if he does not do it himself, it must naturally tend to make him careless in providing against the contingencies of human life.

"But on the other hand, were there no such a provision for him, would he not lay by for a rainy day? Did but his hopes and his confidence rest on the mere charity or humanity of others, would he not take more care to deserve it? If he were a worthless object he would have but little hopes of obtaining it; but were he, on the contrary, a worthy object, he would feel certain. Now here would be a strong inducement to virtue, and a strong check to vice."

"It is calculated that the poor-rates of England amount to about eight million a year. Out of this sum probably not less than four millions are given to those persons who are able to labour. Yet with this immense revenue for the poor, what poverty and wretchedness do we see in every part of the country. Consequently some may say, to deprive them of this four million a year will make their distresses double and treble what they even now are.

"It is not the sum of money which is distributed amongst the poor by way of gift that can ever remove their distresses. If double and treble the amount which is now given were to be distributed, there would be, at least, just as much poverty, just as much want, and in my opinion a great deal more, than there is at this present time.

"Dr. Franklin says, he thinks the best way of doing good to the poor is, not making them easy in poverty, but leading or driving them out of it. He says in his youth he travelled much, and observed in different countries, that the more public provisions were made for the poor the less they provided for themselves, and of course became poorer; and, on the contrary, the less was done for them, the more they did for themselves, and became richer. There is no country in the world where so many provisions are established for them; so many hospitals to receive them when they are sick or lame, founded and

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maintained by voluntary charities; so many almshouses for the aged of both sexes, together with a solemn general law made by the rich *to subject their estates to a heavy tax for the support of the poor*. Under all these obligations, are our poor modest, humble and thankful? And do they use their best endeavours to maintain themselves, and lighten our shoulders of this burden? On the contrary, he affirms that there is no country in the world in which the poor are more idle, dissolute, drunken and insolent. The day you passed that Act, you took away from before their eyes the greatest of all inducements to industry, frugality and sobriety, by giving them a dependence on somewhat else than a careful accumulation during youth and health, for support in age or sickness. In short, you offered a premium for the encouragement of idleness, and you should not now wonder that it has had its effect in the increase of poverty. Repeal that law, and you will soon see a change in their manners; *Saint Monday* and *Saint Tuesday* will soon cease to be holidays. *Six days shalt thou labour*, though one of the old commandments long treated as out of date, will again be looked upon as a respectable precept; industry will increase, and with it plenty among the lower people; their circumstances will mend, and more will be done for their happiness by inuring them to provide for themselves, than could be done by dividing all your estates among them.

“It is necessary that there should be a sufficient dread of want, merely to urge men to industry; and it is also necessary that there should be a sufficient dependency on each other to force us to be humane and kind to others, for our own sakes.

“In no other countries have we ever found those sudden and unaccountable differences in the wages of neighbouring places which we sometimes find in England, where it is often more difficult for a poor man to pass the artificial boundary of a parish, than an arm of the sea, or a ridge of high mountains, natural boundaries, which sometimes separate very distinctly different rates of wages in other countries.

“That there is an obstruction to labour in England, equal to that of an arm of the sea, or high mountains in other countries, is evident; but the boundary is seldom observed.

“When we see the difficulty of obtaining a settlement; corporation laws in corporate towns; the law of apprenticeship preventing those workmen in trades, which are so near a like, changing with one another; the jealousy of strangers; the dread of want that removals sometimes occasion; the fear of being passed as a pauper, and the love of home: when we see all this, we can no longer wonder where the obstruction is in moving to the best market for labour.”

After speaking of the high wages received by the operatives in the large towns, the witness proceeds to state, that--

“The only way to mend the condition of the poor, is by making such good and wholesome laws as will tend to *force them* into the paths of virtue and economy.

“Would it be wise in a parent who had a profligate son, to double his income for the express purpose of making him more comfortable and happy? Under such circumstances would the son become better, or rather would he not become worse? for the fresh supplies would only extend his means, it would the better enable him to carry into effect his inclinations; something like adding fuel to fire.

“But, on the other hand, deprive him of all means of support except his own industry, let him feel that his very existence is depending alone on his own conduct and exertions; will he not then be likely to take the more care for the morrow?

“The *fear of poverty* is the grand stimulus to industry and sobriety. Take away that, and men in a great degree become careless and dissolute.

“It is contended by some of the advocates of the present Poor Laws, that every person in a nation should be considered as a joint-stock proprietor in its produce: that every one should be a shareholder in its surplus wealth, whether he have contributed any thing towards it or not: that the property of the country should be the public purse, into which all the needy have a right to put their hands.

“To advocate such measures as these, is the height of human folly; for it is at once taking away the *fear of poverty*, which is the greatest spur to industry. To attribute the cause that property has accumulated in such large masses, to the labouring people not having been sufficiently paid for their labour, is only adding folly to folly.

“To say that a man has unfairly obtained riches, because he has never paid a sufficient price for labour, is downright nonsense. Would any man work for another for low wages, when he could get higher? Or would any one pay a higher price for labour, when it could be obtained for a lower?

“To say that every man's labour ought to procure him the common necessities of life, is saying nothing at all. Because, what are the necessities of life? Where is the standard? Who is to be the judge? Ask the labourers or mechanics of London; they will say, a sufficiency of white bread, butchers' meat, and so on. Ask the country folks, and they will tell you, brown bread, bacon, and so forth. The Irish labourers will say a sufficiency of potatoes and milk; the Russians tell you train oil, rusk, and so on. Consequently where is the standard of necessities, to satisfy men's wants, to be fixed?”

On the probabilities of amendment by Vestries, he says,

“But although they are not calculated to make all the close calculations and distinctions which may be necessary to the formation of good rules of order and government, still they are generally competent to know who are. A man may not be capable of knowing and understanding all the principles of government, but he might be always competent to know who is more capable than himself.

“The only power, therefore, that the mass of the people should have is, to elect, as often as may be necessary, a certain number to manage matters for the whole. Then, whoever may be elected by the free voice of the whole, and intrusted and delegated with such confidential power, must feel himself highly honoured by having the good opinion of so many of his neighbours; and he will naturally have a feeling of respect for those who have first shown and given such proof of that feeling towards him.”

The

The nature of the general Act which he suggested is thus stated:—

“Revise the Poor Laws. Let none but the orphan and the aged, and those who are *really* unable to labour, be entitled to any parochial relief. Every person should belong to that parish in which he resides when he becomes a claimant. Every obstruction which stops the free circulation of labour should be removed: if not all at once, by degrees. The interest of a part should be no obstruction to the benefit of the whole. Corporate bodies should be thrown open. The statutes of apprenticeship for servitude in many businesses should be for a shorter period. And in all trades open to an unlimited number. No marriage should be legal unless the female be twenty-one years of age. In every parish where the population exceeds one thousand, there should be a town-committee, elected by *every person who pays parochial rates*. The committee should vary in number according to the population of the parish. One-third of them should go out annually, and the places be filled up by the parishioners, or the same be returned again if they thought proper. No person should be a member who had not resided at least five years in the parish, and he should possess either freehold or copyhold property to be eligible. No person should be an elector who had not lived three years in the parish. The committee should act as overseers and managers of all parochial affairs, independent of the parishioners. They should even have the appointing of churchwardens. In case of any defalcation or embezzlement of money by the collector, treasurer, or any other person whom the committee might appoint to any office of trust, every member should be liable *only for his portion* of such defalcation. All accounts, receipts, and expenditure should be once a year audited and made public to the parish.

“In the first place, one general law, something like that which is here proposed, would swallow up the large number of Local Acts, which have caused so much altercation and misunderstanding, and which at the same time have been expensive and complicated in their execution. To maintain and enforce these particular laws has in most parishes assisted very much in augmenting the parochial rates.

“In the hamlet in which I reside, there are several Local Acts. There is one for the poor's rate, one for the watch, one for lighting, one for cleansing the streets, and an old Act for the repairs of roads. Then there are distinct trustees or committees which are appointed under each. There are also certain offices and persons appointed to fill them. First, there is a clerk, who of course must be paid a salary, then a collector, and also a superintendant. Many other expenses which a committee must necessarily incur, such as paper, printing, pens, books, advertisements, town meetings, &c. &c. Now when we find three or four Local Acts in one hamlet, and each of them having as many, and some, perhaps more, places or offices than are here enumerated, we are no longer surprised at the enormous high rates. For the collection alone, under these Acts, there are no less than five collectors, who receive about six hundred a year; if we take into consideration the expenses of each, in hiring brokers and distraining, the whole amount of collecting will exceed this sum.

“In no one of these offices is there too high a salary given. The management of parochial affairs being so divided and complicated that every officer has plenty of work to do for his pay.

“But were the whole of these rates consolidated, and one committee appointed to manage the whole, the expense of collecting, book-keeping, and so forth, would be very little more than that of any one of the present committees. Besides, it would prevent those parish squabbles which now so frequently occur. No ambitious or disappointed man could then have the power of carrying his point upon any particular subject, by making an appeal to the passions of the lowest or the least informed part of the parishioners, nor could *then* any one use his influence in commanding some to act, as is *now* sometimes the case.

*Consolidation of
districts and func-
tions recommended.*

“So far, I have endeavoured to point out the means of taking *off* some of our present burdens. I shall now just suggest the propriety of putting a little *on* to those who are the best able to bear, and who ought in common justice to assist in supporting the weight of taxation.

“There is no kind of property in England that can so ably bear its proportion of taxation as ground-rents, nor is there any kind of property which the public can have so just a claim on for taxes. Where ground-rents exceed the ordinary rent of land, it is owing in a great measure to those laws, which give encouragement to trade and commerce. It is the trade and commerce of England that have swelled out its capital, and many of its towns to their present bulk. And with the protection Government gives, the inhabitants of such places are enabled to pay so much more rent for the ground which they build their houses upon. Where land at particular places has risen to an extraordinary value, does it not owe this rise to the Government of the State? If it do, can any thing be more reasonable than for such property to contribute towards the support of that Government? At a time like the present, when parochial rates and taxes press so heavily on houses and lands, that little rental, and in some instances none, is to be obtained for the landlord, what injustice is it that ground-rents, which are allowed to be the best and most secure property in the country, should not be subject to any of those burdens which the nation has to bear.

“Parochial rates are always charged, or at least are intended to be charged, on property. They are portioned out according to the value of the buildings and lands, and their improved value. A piece of land occupied as a market garden for the production of valuable fruits, &c., would pay more rates than the same quantity of land which grows wheat or any other kind of grain; because a greater sum or capital would be employed on the one than the other. It is not the occupier who is taxed, but the property. Small houses, for instance, are compelled to pay poor-rates, and all other parochial rates and taxes, although they may at the same time be inhabited by persons who are receiving parish relief. This shows clearly that the rates and taxes are, at least, intended to come from those persons who are deriving an interest and profit from such like property. But when we know that there are some who have landed property which produces them hundreds and thousands of pounds a year, and do not contribute directly or indirectly, one penny to the parochial rates and taxes in the parish, from whence they draw these immense sums, and when we know, that instead of taxation lessening the value of their property, it increases it, we shall then cease to wonder what is the cause of the present discontent.

“Let highway robbers be sanctioned by law to rob and plunder the weak and defenceless, and society will not be more injured than by a system of taxation which consumes one description of property, and adds a twofold value to another.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE
LAMBETH-STREET
DISTRICT.

"Suppose a person to have in a parish freehold houses or lands, let to tenants at will, who pay him one hundred pounds a year. These houses or lands are subject to parochial rates and taxes, and the tenants, perhaps, pay them. But if the rates and taxes should increase to an amount which will cause a diminution of rent, is not the landlord's property diminished in value? and will not he then bear a share of the burden of taxation?"

"Now, let us take another case. Suppose a person to have freehold land, in the same parish, that produces him the same rental in ground-rents. His land, we will say, is leased to B., who improves it by expending a sum or capital of 2,000 *l.* on it, in houses or any thing else. Rates and taxes increase, so much so, as will considerably reduce the value of property. This reduction alone falls upon B.'s two thousand pounds. This must be all swallowed up before the ground landlord's can be any way reduced; because he pays no rates and taxes. Therefore it is clear, that even two freehold landholders may have land in one and the same parish, the one whose rents are *precarious*, pays taxes; and the other, whose rents are *certain*, does not pay any.

"Another example. In 1810, houses were very high in value. At that time, A. sold B., for two thousand pounds, a lease of a house, subject to a ground-rent of forty pounds a year. In consequence of the increase of taxation, the value of nearly every kind of property has fallen to about half its former price. This house, which was fourteen years ago worth 2,000 *l.*, is not now worth 200 *l.*; but the 40 *l.* a year ground-rent is raised double in value; for at that time it would only purchase about eighty bushels of wheat, and 40 *l.* at this time will purchase more than one hundred and sixty. Yet this kind of property is subject to no parochial rates, and little or no tax, to support the Government, which gives the possessor of it such a decided advantage! This is not the only evil. For where we know that one person's property is *increasing*, and another person's *decreasing*, owing to an unequal system of taxation, it must naturally create a disposition in one to oppose the Government, and in the other to support it.

"Landholders, or lessors, who have leased off their land, should, nevertheless, be subject to pay parochial rates and taxes in proportion to the rent they receive. It would not interfere with the present mode of rating, nor add any more to the trouble or expense of collecting, nor would it ever be kept secret, or be in any instance exempt from paying, so long as it is charged on the tenant, and the landlord compelled to allow him his proportion in rent.

"For example: A. let a piece of ground to B., for ten pounds a year; B. builds a house worth fifty pounds a year on it, which house is rated in the tax-gatherer's books at forty. B. pays all the rates and taxes, which are proportioned to his forty pounds a year. When B. pays his ground-rent, he says to his landlord, 'This property is considered to be worth forty pounds a year, and is rated at that sum in the parish books; consequently, there is ten pounds a year of that your property, which you have to pay your proportion of rates and taxes, and which I am allowed by law to deduct from your ground-rent.'

"Houses, in general, are not rated at the same rate as they let for, owing to repairs, risk of rent, &c. But the ground landlord has no such expenses, nor any risks; consequently, his amount of the rate may always be the same as the sum he receives.

"According to the present mode, two houses may be together, of equal size and quality; the one a freehold, and the other a leasehold, which pays a ground-rent of ten or twenty pounds a year. The value of the freehold might be one thousand pounds, and the leasehold five hundred, yet both are equally taxed, so that five hundred pounds capital pay the same amount of taxes as one thousand.

"Hence, you see that leases have thrown rates and taxes off landed property, and fixed them on the improvement on it. They are at present impediments to the harmony of society; mere screens to shelter parties from the consequences of taxation. As one step towards a remedy, ground-rents should be compelled to contribute to all the *parochial rates and taxes*."

Your pamphlet was published in 1824, and appears to contemplate one Act or system of administration for all parishes; what is your present view?—I hear it very frequently said in the parish, that it would be a very excellent thing if the Government would take the parish affairs in their own hands, for they see no chance of the present mismanagement being put a stop to, or their rates being reduced under the present system. I myself certainly think these affairs would be better under the control of Government, than under the control of irresponsible and fluctuating bodies. But from all the attention I have given to the subject, I am now convinced that it would be impossible to devise one Act which should apply to all districts. I think that the remedy might be by the appointment of some central board or authority, with power to make rules and regulations either for the general management of all parishes, or for particular local management; this would be the best thing that could be applied. This board or authority, whatever it might be, should be under the control of the representatives of the people or Parliament, and there could be no reasonable apprehension of such a power being misused; for the power of correcting abuse would now, at all events, be with the people by means of their representatives in Parliament.

Would not even this regulating power be deemed an obnoxious interference?—It might be unpopular for a short time, as the new police was, which in our district and most others now gives general satisfaction; but I consider it a very necessary interference, for the protection of the good order of society against the worst misgovernment. I think it necessary for the protection of property, which is now giving way, and must continue to give way under the pressure of pauperism. Rents are now much reduced, in consequence of the heaviness of the rates. We have 800 empty houses in our parish, and persons are constantly leaving it to go to other parishes where the rates are lower. As the owner of houses, I can speak to these effects from my own knowledge.

Impossible to devise
one Act which shall
apply to all districts.

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MILE END NEW TOWN (MIDDLESEX.)

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chantwick,
Esq.THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	5,253	6,028	7,091	7,384

Expenditure for the Relief of the Poor - }	-	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
		£. 1,075	£. 1,794	£. 908	£. 1,234	£. 1,875	£. 1,957

Mr. George Adams Farr, Managing Clerk to Mr. Carron, Attorney, and Vestry-Clerk of
Mile End New Town.

I HAVE been conversant in parochial matters since I was a boy. During the last twelve years, I have been engaged as a clerk in the transaction of business for our parish.

The rates have greatly increased in this district, in consequence of the increasing difficulty experienced by the weavers in obtaining employment. We have a silk-weaver as the master of our workhouse, and we keep about eight looms employed. From the difficulty we find in getting work, we can form some opinion of the depressed state of the trade.

We have employed some few men in the house, but we have never given money from the rates in aid of wages to able-bodied men out of the house. When we have given money to working men, it was temporary relief only, and in consequence of illness.

Have never given
out-door relief to
Weavers in aid of
Wages.

Do the wages and general condition of the weavers of your parish differ from the condition of weavers resident in other parishes in the metropolis?—Not from the condition of weavers resident in districts in the immediate vicinity of the parish.

Do you find that the weavers in your parish with wives and families of three or four or five children can, if they will, support themselves creditably when in full or fair work?—Supposing the wife to be a weaveress, I should say they could.

Do families of that size support themselves by weaving who do not come upon the parish?—Yes, they do; especially where their previous character as workmen has been good, for this would get them constant employment.

Can persons of a large family support themselves exclusively by weaving?—Yes; for a child of ten years of age is seldom an incumbrance to a parent when there is work for them.

Did you ever experience the necessity of adopting a scale of allowance from rates in aid of wages?—Never. If the parish had adopted the plan, it would have been eaten up: it would have been impossible to have collected rates adequate to the burthen.

What has been the effect of the new system adopted at Lambeth-street Police Office?—Highly beneficial. We at once got rid of 40 or 50 bad characters, and their influx was put a stop to. Had the old system gone on, our rates must have been considerably higher.

Effect of leaving
Paupers to the
discretion of Over-
seers.

Were the poor unusually discontented when the change took place?—By no means more discontented than usual.

Did the independent poor manifest any sympathy with the 50, of whose claims the officers disburthened the parish?—No, I never heard of any; the labouring parishioners were well satisfied with the proceedings of the parish officers. There was no tumult, nor anything of the kind dreamt of.

How do you now proceed?—The beadle generally visits the cases, under my directions; we have no other visitation. We have never tried relief in kind. With all our care, we are greatly imposed upon; and I am satisfied it must be so extensively in all parishes. We compound for the rates of nearly half the houses in the parish with the landlord, and the rates are now so very heavy that the landlord cannot pay them. We then distrain upon the premises. The tenants, being fearful of being distrained upon for their landlord's default, abscond. In 1822, the rate was 6d. in the pound; it is now 6s.

What is the effect of the increasing burthen of the poor's-rate within your district?—I think that every ninth house is now empty, and the proportion of empty houses increasing rapidly. We have two whole streets in our small parish in which the houses are nearly entirely empty. There the property is entirely destroyed. If there are two or three occupants in them, it is as much as there is. The shopkeepers are sinking rapidly, and they must soon go. The whole value of the property in the neighbourhood is wonderfully depreciated.

Property depreci-
ated by the Poor's-
rates.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

ST. ANNE, LIMEHOUSE, (MIDDLESEX.)

THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

Population - -		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.		
		4,678	7,386	9,805	15,695		
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
		£. 1,769	£. 4,183	£. 6,400	£. 5,706	£. 6,295	£. 5,988

Mr. William Sewell, Churchwarden, St. Anne, Limehouse.

FROM Lady-day 1827 to Lady-day 1829, I was overseer. I am now in office as churchwarden.

At the time I entered into office the rates were very high; they were then 4s. 6d. without the police rate. We had then an assistant-overseer; he had been elected by the vestry, which is an open vestry; I did not consider him well qualified for his office; I thought that the rates were much higher than they ought to have been if he had paid due attention to his duties; he was dismissed at my instance. During the whole time of my being in office we were greatly annoyed by the conduct of the then magistrates at Lambeth-street, in ordering relief to all applicants, without reference to character or to claim either, except that a man must have a settlement. We however put the paupers to such labour as to obstruct their progress to the attainment of relief, and by that means reduce the relief. The effect of Mr. Walker's administration has been highly beneficial to the parish. I consider that unless he had been in office, the parish officers would never have been able to reduce the rates to the extent which they carried them.

During the time I was in office I never knew any evil result from refusing relief to the able-bodied labourers. I never heard from any quarter any complaint of hardship or cruelty, or injustice committed in consequence of the paupers being left at the mercy of the parish officers.

Mr. William Baker, Vestry-Clerk of the parish of St. Anne, Limehouse.

OF late the mere parochial business of the administration of the poor laws in our parish, as far as I am concerned, has been conducted by my managing clerk, and I therefore do not feel myself so competent to speak of it.

Cases of Starvation

have generally been
the result of neglect.

In the course of my experience as coroner of Middlesex, acting in a district comprehending a population of nearly 400,000 people, during the time I have been in office, I have held about 1,100 inquests. I have not seen more, probably more than 10 or 12 cases in which want of food appeared to have been one of the principal causes of the death of the party. I do not recollect one instance in which the jury found that the deceased had died of starvation. In nearly all the cases the want of food resulted from the neglect of the parties to take any of the most easy means of procuring it. In some of the instances the neglect amounted almost to suicide. I do not remember one instance in which a person has died in consequence of being refused relief from a parish to which he belonged, or on which he had any great or *prima facie* ground of claim. There was one case of extreme misery, where a woman had lived with her daughter in the most deplorable condition for a long time without adequate food or clothing. She had lived in this state for eight weeks; she had never received parochial relief, and never applied to any parish until about two days before her death.

In most instances which I have seen, were cases of independent poor, or persons who were above accepting parochial aid, and who would suffer to the last rather than accept charitable relief of any kind. These cases are indeed frightful, and must be expected to occur, as frightful suicides occur under the best regulated system that can be devised. The above may, perhaps, be said to be a case of suicide. In some instances parties are exposed to severe sufferings before their claims can be ascertained; this appears to be an evil belonging to the law of settlement, and I do not see how it could be remedied without the admission of greater evils and of frauds still more boundless than at present, or without abolishing the law of settlement, or giving a party a claim to relief on the spot where he happens to lie, and without previous inquiry into the grounds of the claim.

There appears to be a great defect in the law with relation to the means of collecting arrears from former overseers. The following case, on which we took the opinion of counsel, will explain the difficulties to which parishes are liable in this respect.

" On

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

"On the 4th day of April 1832, Messrs. A. E. and F. retired from office, and Messrs. G. H. and I. were chosen overseers by vestry to succeed them, and were duly appointed accordingly. A committee was appointed by vestry on the 1st June 1832, to examine the accounts of Messrs. A. B. and C. for the year 1830-1, and also of Messrs. A. E. and F. for 1831-2; a late discovery having been made that there were certain sums which they had received on account of the parish from other parishes and persons, no mention of which had been at all made in the statement of their accounts, but altogether omitted, and at the time of the audit of their accounts altogether unknown to vestry. It was ascertained clearly by the committee, and reported to vestry, that there were different sums received by one or other of the overseers, Messrs. A. B. and C., in the year 1830, amounting altogether to 28 l. 13 s."

"After an attentive consideration of this case, I am of opinion that there is no available remedy by which the payment of the sums in question can be enforced. There is no remedy under the statutes; the successors to the overseers who have made default having gone out of office, and the accounts not having been verified, &c. according to the 17 Geo. 2, c. 38, and justices having no power to commit overseers for an objectionable account. There is no remedy at common law for overseers, and their duties and rights depend on statute, and did not exist at common law. A remedy may exist in equity to compel an account with the present churchwardens and overseers, but the sum is too small to render it advisable to take any proceeding in that court."

"3, Inner Temple-lane,
10th Sept. 1832."

"Thomas Chitty."

POPLAR AND BLACKWALL (MIDDLESEX.)

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.	
Population - -		4,493	7,708	12,223	16,849.	
		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.
		£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }		1,387	7,367	10,763	8,501	10,848
						11,722

Mr. James Brodie Gordon, Overseer of All Saints, Poplar; Mr. Thomas Horne, Vestry-Clerk and Assistant-Overseer.

Mr. Gordon has served two years. Mr. Horne has served 17 years as vestry-clerk and assistant-overseer, having previously served one year as overseer, and one year as churchwarden.

[See part of the Examination of these Witnesses under the head, "Effects of the Law of Settlement," post.]

What is your usual amount of allowance to persons out of employment?—(Mr. Horne.) Out-door relief Seven shillings is the largest amount we have ever given; but that is under very peculiar circumstances, to a man who has been respectable in the parish. We give from 3 s. to 4 s. Men. a week to a man who is entirely out of work, and who has a wife and three or four children to maintain. It is very rare indeed that we give anything to able-bodied single men.

Are you never imposed upon by persons who receive relief as being entirely out of work, and who yet get work occasionally?—We go from time to time to inspect the dock-yards, and we know our labourers so well that, although we might be imposed upon occasionally, it could hardly be to any considerable extent. We pay them on a Friday, so that the day's work will be broken: we begin paying at half-past nine in winter, and are occupied until about one o'clock with the casual poor, and from three to half-past four we pay the regular pensioners. A man will have his day broken by waiting two or four hours, and it will hardly be worth his while to lose a day's work or 3 s. for 2 s. or 3 s. parish relief.

Have you ever given relief in kind to your out-door poor?—We have given extra relief, bread and coals, during severe seasons, but we have never given our extra relief in kind. The imposition was so great that I am decidedly against giving relief in kind; I have known a ticket for a bushel of coals, which was worth 1 s. 6 d., sold for sixpence.

Do you not find mischievous consequences result from keeping crowds of paupers waiting three or four hours together in idleness; must not the children be contaminated by association with the elder paupers?—We do not allow children to come. If a man with his family receives relief, the wife comes, or the eldest daughter, a girl of 18 or 19 years of age.

How many females of that age are usually in attendance?—Not many girls; the wives more commonly attend, in consequence of the illness or inability of the husbands.

Have you a considerable number of married women?—A considerable number.

Do you relieve applicants without reference to their characters?—(Mr. Horne.) Formerly we were compelled to do so, by the interference of the magistrates. When Sir Daniel Williams presided at Lambeth-street, he would always order relief, and he would scarcely ever listen to the representations of a parish officer. His usual question to the parish officer was,

Magisterial interference.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

Effects of its abo-
lition.

Effects on inde-
pendent Labourers
of the check to
Relief.

Condition of Pau-
pers as compared
with independent
Labourers.

was, "Do you intend to relieve them, or do you not?" I have been summoned to answer as many as 70 cases in one day, and he has got rid of them all without going into one, when I attended. The answer must be yes or no. In one instance, the captain of a vessel was passing by the workhouse-door, accompanied by two lads, who were endeavouring to carry a trunk which was too heavy for them. The captain said that he would give any one of the able-bodied men who were waiting at the door (I think there were a dozen or more able-bodied men) two shillings, if they would assist the lads in carrying the trunk to Stepney Causeway (a distance which does not exceed a mile), but they all refused, one giving the answer for the rest. The captain complained to me of this refusal, but he got no assistance. I however thought this was at all events a case for discontinuing the allowance to the one able-bodied pauper who had acted as spokesman to the rest, and he obtained a summons from Sir Daniel Williams. When I attended, and was about to state the case, Sir Daniel cut me short, by saying, "Do you intend to relieve him, or do you not?" I said that we did not. "Then," said Sir Daniel, "I will make an order upon you to relieve him;" to which I replied, that we would save him the trouble by taking the man into the workhouse. The man never came, and I have never seen him since. Mr. Wyatt's practice was different; he did go into the case, and would not order relief to a worthless applicant. I therefore contrived to attend on his day if I could; but notwithstanding this, a great number of bad characters were forced upon the parish by the interference of the magistrates. When the new practice of Mr. Walker, of leaving the paupers to the discretion of the parish officers, came into practice, we got rid of a large proportion of them: we got rid of 40 or 50 in various ways.

Did you discontinue your allowance to the most worthless characters all at once?—No; we gradually reduced it from week to week, at the rate of 4*d.* a week, or such small sums.

What has been the effect of the change of system upon the paupers, and upon the labouring classes in the parish generally?—(Mr. Horne.) The paupers are in a much better state; they are much more orderly, and less discontented. They do not expect so much as they used to do, and they are grateful for what they do get; but we have not made any alteration in the system, except in the cases of very bad conduct indeed. We have not taken any advantage of the paupers.—(Mr. Gordon.) I have lived 30 years in the parish, and being a cooper and shipowner, employing in my own business between 40 and 50 men, I am conversant with the condition of the labouring classes, and can state that the effect upon them in our district has been very beneficial. It has been beneficial in inducing them to rely more on their own resources than they did formerly. It has long struck me, that they contribute more regularly and largely to savings' banks and benefit societies; in fact, I know this to be the case, as I am one of the trustees of the Poplar Savings' Bank. Now I have only one man working in my yard who does not contribute to a benefit society established amongst the men some years ago, at the instance of my brother; formerly, there were a great number of the men who did not contribute to it. Speaking of my own men, I can state that they are much more steady in their work, and more careful than formerly in not throwing themselves out of work.

A man with a family being out of work in your parish, do you relieve him without reference to his former means of making provision against the contingency of his being thrown out of work?—Yes, we do.

Have you not many men in your employ who receive good wages during the time of their having work, who nevertheless spend all as fast as they get it, and throw themselves upon the parish when they are out of work?—There are some, but I do not think the number considerable.

What descriptions of workmen are they?—Shipwrights, caulkers and sawyers; shipwrights especially.

Do you think it would be a beneficial provision if legislative authority were given to parish officers to attach a portion of the wages of such men when they were in work?—(Mr. Gordon.) I think it would be very beneficial. I think that when the men saw that the relief was given as a loan, they would save from their surplus earnings; it would keep many men off the parish, as they would not like their masters to know that they had been receiving parochial relief. When I employ shipwrights, I cannot get them at less than 5*s.* and 6*s.* a day. I employ 12 or 14 sawyers, who earn from 30*s.* to 2*l.* a week each, piece-work; notwithstanding that they very seldom work on the Monday. In general they spend that day in drinking. The coopers get more money by the piece. With regard to paupers generally, I find that pauperism runs in families, and that the number is increased by such causes as independent labourers coming into the workhouse during sickness or otherwise, and seeing how well the paupers live there without work.

What is the diet and condition of the paupers in the workhouse, as compared with the diet and condition of independent labourers in your parish?—The paupers in the workhouse, I am convinced, live better than the labouring men in my employment; even those labourers who receive good day wages. I have complained in the public vestry that the paupers are too well fed.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

ST. GEORGE IN THE EAST.							
		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.		
Population - -		21,170	26,917	32,528	38,505		
		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }		£. 4,209	£. 9,858	£. 13,501	£. 16,227	£. 16,180	£. 15,238

Mr. Abraham Gole, Churchwarden of St. George's in the East.

I HAVE been in office as churchwarden four years, and as trustee twelve years.

We have now no assistant-overseer. We have had four in our parish during seven years. They were appointed by the board, but they have each turned out badly, and we have been compelled to discharge them. Inquiries into the cases of paupers are made by our two beadles. I am of opinion that there is too much to do in the way of investigation for any unpaid officer to accomplish.

In our district and the vicinity the demand for labour has of late years been greatly reduced. The competition of the dock companies has reduced profits; they have reduced the wages of labour and the number of labourers; their engines have suspended labour. In rope making, and other branches of manufacture, improvements have had the same tendency to reduce the quantity of labour, and notwithstanding the increased amount of tonnage, there can be no doubt that the total demand for labour used in the district has been greatly reduced. In our parish we have long found it absolutely necessary to give relief to able-bodied labourers out of employment. We give, as casual relief, never more than 1 s. to a single man; if he has a wife and one or two children, we may give from 1 s. 6 d. to 2 s.; if he has a large family, 3 s. As permanent relief, we give to a

Out-door Relief to
able-bodied Paupers.

		s.	d.
Widow	- - - - -	1	6 per week
— with one child, not at the breast	- - - - -	2	—
— — at the breast	- - - - -	2	6 —
Married man and wife, if an old couple decayed	- - - - -	3	—
Married man, with a family, the man sick, we allow the family at the rate of 1 s. a head.	- - - - -		
The average of the highest pension is	- - - - -	7	—

The total number of out-door poor is about 2,230.

The only visitation of the cases of pensioners or casual poor, is when the overseer suspects that there is reason for a visit; he directs the beadle to make a visit, and report to him, the overseer. Sometimes the same direction is given by the board of trustees. The impression on my mind is, that the beadle inquires into about a dozen cases in the course of the week, by order of the overseers or the boards of trustees. In the cases of casual relief a great deal is taken on trust, but inquiry is made into every case where the party applies to be taken on the permanent list.

Mode of Investiga-
tion.

What proportion of these cases do you judge from your own experience, to be cases of blameless want; that is, want resulting from causes which no common prudence, no prudence of the nature of that which may be found amongst the labouring classes, could avert?—In the investigation of cases, I should say, that I have not found above 25 per cent. of cases of blameless want: in saying this, I think I give a liberal average. Formerly we had numbers of bad characters imposed upon us by the interference of the magistrates: they ordered us to relieve cases of the worst description. But a change in the administration of the poor laws has taken place in this district, and the overseers and parish officers are now left to their uncontrolled discretion. Mr. Walker, the magistrate of Lambeth-street, as much as possible avoids interfering. The only effect produced at first was some discontent amongst the sturdy and dissolute paupers. These characters, who had been in the habit of receiving casual relief, got less relief when the change took place, and the influx of new claimants of this description was considerably checked. On the whole, the change was much for the better; the deserving poor were as well attended to as ever, while the sturdy impostors were totally rejected. We have 84 paupers in our workhouse, and we find, notwithstanding the space is large, that room for classification is much wanted.

Character of the
Paupers.

Effects of the
Magistrates' refusal
to interfere.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

ST. LEONARD, BROMLEY, (MIDDLESEX.)

Population		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
		1,684	3,581	4,360	4,846

Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
	£. 755	£. 1,848	£. 4,013	£. 3,513	£. 4,692	£. 4,425

Mr. Samuel Meredith Townsend, Vestry-Clerk and Collector of the Parish of
St. Leonard, Bromley.

I HAVE been connected with this parish 19 years; 17 years I have been surveyor of the roads and overseer and collector.

Effects of the re-
fusal of the Magis-
trates to hear the
complaints of the
Paupers.

Out-door Relief.
Difficulty of proving
Imposture in the
Receivers.

Impossible to fur-
nish the Proof of
Imposture required
by the Magistrate.

Moral effects of the
former system.

Before Mr. Walker came as the magistrate at Lambeth-street, any vigilance of the parish officers or any circumspection was rendered fruitless by the kind benevolence of the then magistrates (Sir Daniel Williams and others), who were in the habit of listening readily to all applications made against parish officers by discontented paupers, and putting into the hands of those same paupers summonses against the officers. The burthen of proving that the man was not in employment was always thrown upon the parish, instead of upon the claimant. Now I, as the assistant-overseer, have seen a man going to and from his residence in working hours, and have been satisfied from such circumstances that he had work. A man working at the docks would have the tar on his hands from the day's work; a plasterer would have the day's lime on his coat, which would be as fresh as the day's powder on a wig; these, and a number of other circumstances, would to the mind of any person acquainted with the habits of such classes of persons, be quite conclusive evidence that a man was in work; but they were never heard by the magistrates adverted to. There are other circumstances, in the mere manner of a man, by which you can tell whether he is in work; these circumstances are such as you can hardly describe; they would properly, however, satisfy a parish officer that a man was in work somewhere, which was all that was requisite. But this would not satisfy the magistrate; you must prove where the man was at work, whether at the London Docks or the St. Katherine's Docks, or any other docks. This was a thing impossible for parish officers to do unless by an enormous amount of labour, which they never could be expected to take. The consequence was, that all claims upon the parish at that time increased, and we had great numbers of able-bodied men fixed upon it. The new practice adopted at Lambeth-street, at the instance of Mr. Walker, has checked these practices, as he does not interfere against the parish officers; had he acted in Sir Daniel Williams's time our rates would have not been one-half what they were then, and would have been much less than they now are. But there has been no diminution of the rates in consequence of the falling off of the demand for labour at the docks and other commercial establishments.

What was the moral effect of the former system?—Excessively bad. It made men careless of getting work when work was to be obtained, and it was gradually bringing respectable mechanics into the class of paupers, as one claim created a claim from his neighbours, and children followed parents.

Was any discontent excited or any rioting occasioned amongst the independent labourers or amongst the poor, by this change of system?—The paupers of course complained, but ultimately they became much better behaved; the independent labourers took no concern about the matter.

From your knowledge of the labouring classes, do you believe that if a similar change of system were made throughout the country, any mischiefs would result?—I cannot speak about the agricultural districts; but I do not believe the independent labourers would concern themselves about it in towns.

ST. MARY STRATFORD, BOW, (MIDDLESEX.)

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	2,101	2,259	2,349	3,371

Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor -	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
	£. 1,154	£. 1,825	£. 3,114	£. 1,150	£. 2,500	£. 2,369

Mr. Isaac Willis, Collector of the Poor's-rates to the Parish of *St. Mary Stratford, Bow*.

I HAVE been connected with the parish about 17 or 18 years.

In the year 1824 an examination took place into the expenses of the workhouse, when we found that the expense of each person in the workhouse was about 8s. per week. This was the result of carelessness and profusion in the weighing out and the distribution, but we found no jobbing. We then began to let the house out to contract, and the first contract was for the keep of the poor at 4s. 6d. per head, and to maintain them on the same dietary that had been prescribed under the previous management. This has answered so well that we have ever since continued it. The paupers themselves were satisfied, because there is more order and comfort.

THE LAMBETH-STREET DISTRICT
Contract Management and Parish Management of the Workhouse.

Are the poor or the pauperized classes in your district (part of the Lambeth-street Police-office district) left to the parish officers?—They are in part left entirely to the parish officers, as the magistrate interferes very little with them, as little as he can possibly help; he only acts in very particular cases.

Effects in this Parish of the non-interference of Magistrates.

What has been the effect of this mode of proceeding in your parish?—I have many times observed, that I think the labouring classes look out for employment better for themselves as well as for their children, and keep in employment better; they are also much more contented, and the whole change I think morally beneficial. I believe Mr. Walker is popular with the labouring classes, and much respected by them.

The Rev. Mr. James, Minister of *Stepney*.

FROM 17 years observation of the effects of the poor laws in my parish, I can state, that I have found their whole effects exceedingly demoralizing and injurious to the best interests of the poor themselves. I have always viewed their operation with relation to the poor themselves, and have never regarded the burthens of the poor's-rates upon the rich.

Effects of the Poor Laws on the morals more injurious than the pecuniary effects.

Such is the present state of the system, that it is scarcely possible for any alteration to make it worse, or not to be an amendment. The bounties on immorality which are offered by the system are such as are beyond any minister's power to cope with.

One of the first steps to an amendment has always appeared to me to be some measure for obtaining uniformity of administration in all parishes. I think a larger aggregate management with greater subdivisions should be substituted for the present system. Mr. Walker, the magistrate of Lambeth-street, in whose district two of the hamlets are situated, has declined interfering with the administration of relief by the parish officers; and the effects of this non-interference have been reported to me to be very beneficial. I have heard no outcries or charges of cruelty and oppression made as resulting from this system. I have never seen any cases of the kind.

Uniformity of administration, and administration on a larger scale, the first steps to amendment.

Thomas Walker, Esq., Magistrate of the *Lambeth-street* Police Office, examined.

How long have you presided as one of the police magistrates at Lambeth-street?—About three years and a half.

Did you immediately on going to that office decline interfering with the administration of parochial relief by the parish officers of the district?—Immediately, as far as I was myself concerned: I heard the applicants, but in no instance ordered relief; but a few months elapsed before that portion of business was left by my colleagues entirely to me. The first measure adopted after I went to the office was to limit, through the whole district of nine parishes, the days for applying for relief to Tuesday and Saturday in each week; a rule which had been in operation about two years, so far as regarded the parish of White-chapel. I have made it a point never to be absent on those days, in order to take away from the paupers all hopes of relaxation, and to give confidence to the parish officers.

How were the paupers who came in the intervals dealt with?—In particular cases they were admitted. I heard them patiently, and put them off as well as I could. The rule was gradually enforced.

Have no unpleasant consequences ever occurred from the adoption of your practice of refusing to interfere in behalf of paupers?—I fully expected that there would have been unpleasant consequences, and I was quite prepared to meet any case, on the ground that partial evil must sometimes be incurred to attain general good; but to my great surprise, not a single untoward circumstance has occurred. There have been three or four alleged cases of starvation, but the answers given to them were triumphant. In one case a coroner's jury returned a verdict, that the deceased had died in consequence of having been refused sufficient relief by the parish officers of St. George's in the East; whereas it was proved, that he had never applied to the parish officers of St. George's, and that he might have been received whenever he wished into the workhouse at Rotherhithe; he was brought before me as a vagrant; I have never seen so wretched an object; loathsome, feeble, and in the last extremity of disease. From my knowledge of the superior management of the medical department in the house of correction, I thought it would be

Surprised to find that not a single untoward circumstance occurred from the refusal to hear the complaints of Paupers.

Instance of alleged Starvation.

Appendix (A.)

THE LAMBETH-STREET DISTRICT.

Instance of the materials afforded for popular declamation by colourable cases of suffering.

Instances of Starvation cases.

No Beggar ever died of Starvation.

Instances of cases liable to be represented as cases of Starvation and Neglect.

No conceivable degradation to which the species might not be reduced by giving facilities for a degraded breed.

Behaviour of undeserving objects.

Manner of paramount importance in managing the labouring classes.

giving him the best chance to send him under the Vagrant Act to the hospital there; the commitment was necessarily, *in form*, a commitment to hard labour; but the medical officer is the judge as to the propriety of its enforcement. This is a case which shows what credit is due to popular declamation: it was stated by a public man, "Here, on the face of it, is a case of extreme cruelty. The defence to the charge, that the deceased died in consequence of the neglect of parish officers, is, that he died in the last stage of consumption; and the magistrate admitting this fact, also admits that he committed him to hard labour in the house of correction," when in truth he was sent to the house of correction, that he might receive the best treatment. I have never known any case of starvation resulting from a refusal to give relief: the greater number of cases of starvation arise from extreme miserly habits, or from persons of extreme nervousness, who are unwilling to make application for relief or leave their rooms. A woman in distress lives upon tea and bread and butter, and day after day gradually reduces the quantity until she dies of inanition. I apprehend this is the course of these cases; but no system can provide against them. Domiciliary visits cannot be made to the houses of all persons who may be distressed, and if such visits were made, the parties would not acknowledge their suffering. I am not aware of any case in which a person who has sought parochial relief, or any beggar, ever died of starvation. Casualties occurring among the indigent or profligate are at all times liable to be represented as cases resulting from the neglect of the proper authorities. Some time ago, in going round the parish of Whitechapel with the churchwardens during service time, we entered an old building in Rosemary-lane, for which there was then no owner; the stairs were so dark and ruinous, that, though it was mid-day, we were obliged to have a candle to enable us to go up them; the first floor was the receptacle of every description of filth. We entered one room, in which we found two half-naked dirty children; their mother lay in one corner on some dirty straw, covered only with a sack. There was no furniture or any other articles in the place, except a faggot of wood and a few broken plates, a basket of skate, and some sprats strewed on the floor. This woman was a fish hawker; a business by which, in all probability, she gained enough to have made her extremely comfortable, but she preferred an alternation of great privation and profligate enjoyment. Had she accidentally died in this state, here would have been a scene of misery and a case of excitement for the philanthropists. In our district there are other premises under similar circumstances, all of which are tenanted by persons of the very lowest grade, and it is surprising, considering the state in which they live, that unaccountable deaths, having the semblance of starvation, do not take place amongst them. From what I have observed of these places, I am fully convinced, that if shambles were built on any spot, and all who chose were allowed to occupy them, they would soon be occupied by a race lower than any yet known. I have often said, that if empty casks were placed along the streets of Whitechapel, in a few days each of them would have a tenant, and these tenants would keep up their kind and prey upon the rest of the community. I am sure that if such facilities were offered, there is no conceivable degradation to which portions of the species might not be reduced. Allow these tub-men no education, and you would have so many savages living in the midst of civilization. Wherever there are empty houses which are not secured they are soon tenanted by wretched objects, and these tenants continue so long as there is a harbour for them. Parish officers and others come to me to aid them in clearing such places; I tell the police and the parish that there is no use in their watching these places, that they must board them up, if they would get rid of the occupants. If they will give the accommodation, they will get the occupants. If you will have marshes and stagnant waters, you will there have suitable animals; and the only way of getting rid of them is by draining the marshes.

In what way did the paupers act when you first informed them that you would not interfere against the parish officers?—I always heard them patiently, and they generally submitted quietly. Sometimes they declared that they would go to the lord mayor, who, as the head of the city, is considered bound to be especially humane. If I heard them complain or throw out an intimation of that sort, I was sure they were undeserving objects: if when I have delivered from the bench what I considered strict doctrine, any one has bowed assent and retired in silence, I have always had misgivings that that was a deserving object. These last were the only cases in which I have had any misgivings, and they were very few. Sometimes I could not refrain from giving money out of my own pocket, but I believe I have always been wrong in doing so. I have heard the applicants patiently, and dismissed the case without any manifestation of ill-temper, or what might be considered contumely or insult. A clergyman who used to come and sit on the bench with me, has told me that his hair has almost stood on end at hearing what I said to those who applied for relief, and that he was almost as much surprised to hear them thank me when I dismissed them. Manner is of paramount importance in managing the labouring classes. They will bear any thing but what they consider insult: they will bear personal injury much sooner than insult. I remember an instance of a labouring man having his front tooth knocked out and stating (in preferring the charge before me), that he should not have complained of that had not the aggressor called him a thief.

Did you receive any insults or manifestations of hatred on the part of independent labourers or others of the labouring classes, who have not been applicants to you for relief?—Never. Whenever I have had any occasion to communicate with them, I have been received in a manner the reverse of that which most persons would anticipate. For the purpose of making myself acquainted with the people and the local peculiarities of the district,

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Appendix, (A.)

THE LAMBETH-STREET DISTRICT.

district, I lived in it several months; during that period I was frequently out in the worst streets alone, and at late hours. I have had occasion to go to the workhouses, into public-houses and lodging houses, where the worst people congregate, and never met with any other behaviour than marked civility.

I will put as questions to you some of the leading propositions in an article published in the Quarterly Review, in which there are some strictures on what are stated to be your opinions. "An opinion has been expressed, and even by some persons of considerable authority*, that the first step in the improvement of the poor laws should be, the putting an end to all interference of the magistrate in questions of relief." What have been the chief results of your experience on this point?—I would give my answer in the following terms, from my pamphlet:

Grounds for witness's opinion as to the expediency of putting an end to the interference of Magistrates in parochial management.

"1st. The members of the select vestry possess the best opportunities of ascertaining the merits of each particular case. The justices, on the contrary, frequently and almost necessarily lay down general rules for ordering relief; they have seldom time or the means for coming at the exact truth. It is not possible for the overseer to repeat all the reasons brought forward in the vestry, or to give the same effect to statements at second hand, which was rightly produced by the character and credit of the persons originally furnishing them. The decision of the vestry was perhaps the result of long discussion and much evidence, by the parties best acquainted with the case. *The decision of the justices cannot well be the result of anything but a contest between the pauper and the overseer.*

"2dly. The overseer is often a timid or injudicious advocate for the parish; whereas the pauper is generally extremely artful, the most undeserving being almost always the most plausible, and the idlest in good works the most persevering in obtaining relief.

"3dly. If the paupers knew there was no possibility of appeal, they would rely more upon honest exertion and good character, and less upon imposition. As the law now stands, their hopes are always kept alive, and they live in a constant state of uneasiness very prejudicial to their well-being. They would also be effectually deterred from gaining settlements surreptitiously, an evil which no legal enactments have hitherto been able altogether to prevent.

"4thly. The considerations of time and expense necessary in attending the magistrates operate as a powerful discouragement to parishes to be as strict with their poor as they ought to be. The vestry often submit to what they feel to be an imposition, rather than run the risk of an appeal, especially as they are sometimes obliged to pay the pauper for the time he has spent in harassing the overseer.

"5thly. If the decisions of the select vestry were final, I think the management of the poor would, generally speaking, fall into much better hands than heretofore. It is the certain effect of the present system, that men in the same rank with the magistrates, and those a little below, will feel great repugnance to interfere so long as their efforts shall be liable to be rendered of no avail by the counter-decisions of those whose motives cannot be supposed to be more pure, and whose means of judging are necessarily more limited than their own. They feel also the right of appeal has a tendency to degrade and render them odious in the eyes of the inferior classes, as well as to embroil them with the magistrates. If the management of the poor rested solely with the select vestry, the active would make it their business to attend in the hope of doing good, and the humane to prevent evil. The magistrates too, by being relieved from the necessity of hearing the poor, which is often the most laborious, the most unpleasant, and the most unsatisfactory part of their duties, would have more leisure to attend to the other business brought before them; and many men with high qualifications, at present unwilling to make the necessary sacrifice of time and of ease, might be induced, with this alleviation, to act in the commission of the peace.

"6thly and lastly. The minister of each parish is, *ex officio*, a member of the vestry, and yet from him, assisted by his most respectable parishioners, lies an appeal to the magistrates, *on the grounds of inhumanity or injustice*. The consequence is, the clergyman, not to expose himself to a great scandal, will seldom attend; and the magistrate, being the judge of appeal, cannot.

"Besides the above reasons, my opinion has been confirmed by the excellent evidence of the Reverend Henry Duncan (the first establisher of savings' banks), given in the Report from the Committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Laws in 1819. See p. 13, on the interference of the sheriff in Scotland.

"As the effect of any principle is very much weakened unless its enforcement is general, I think it highly desirable that the constitution of select vestries should be made imperative whenever it is practicable, and that in parishes or divisions not possessing the necessary elements, the general vestry should be invested with similar powers. As the Select Vestry Act has now been in operation some years, and with very beneficial results, there is the less hazard in setting it to work by itself; and in extending its powers to the cases above alluded to, I cannot see any evils likely to counter-balance the advantages to be derived from uniformity of system. In the Act which first empowers magistrates to dispose of the parish funds, *no complaint whatever of oppression is even hinted at*. I have always thought, from observation, that the right of appeal to the magistrates was the sole cause of whatever alienation existed between the payer of rates and the labouring classes, and that the spirit of opposition, and not of oppression, was the evil to be guarded against. It is certain that the most

* "For example, Mr. Walker, one of the police magistrates in the metropolis, in his 'Observations on the Nature and Extent of Pauperism,' a pamphlet containing much that is deserving of attention, but in which all the evils incidental to a legal provision for the poor are exaggerated, and all its advantages overlooked."

Appendix, (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT.

most worthless are the first to appeal to the justices; their example is followed, and a general hostility is the consequence. In the more enlightened parishes, of course, there would be no danger of oppression; in the less so, the danger is the other way, for it will be found universally that, amongst the ignorant, fear, favour, and a false calculation of interest, strongly tend to increase the allowance of parish pay; and it is the practice of paupers to act in concert, and clamorously to inveigh against any infringement of the supposed rights of even the most helpless of their body."

The reviewer says, "We are fully aware that the power of magistrates to order relief, or, as it is sometimes strongly but unfairly put by those who oppose it, 'to be charitable with other people's money,' is open to occasional abuse; that instances may and do occur in which a false humanity, weakness of judgment, want of patience or leisure for a full investigation of conflicting statements, and a mean craving for popularity among the lowest poor, lead individual magistrates to side too much with the pauper in his contests with the overseer, and sanction impositions on the parochial fund. But an appeal to the petty sessions bench, where the presence of several magistrates serves to correct the liability to error of individual judgment, generally secures a fair decision."—It is well known that in petty sessions they always adjudicate according to the rule or scale promulgated at the quarter sessions, and not according to the merits of the particular cases; they say, How many children has this man?—Four. Then he must have so much; for that is the sum which it is the general rule at the quarter sessions to allow. When numerous cases come before the petty sessions, it is impracticable to have them investigated.

The reviewer further says, "For example, Mr. Walker, one of the police magistrates in the metropolis, in his 'Observations on the Nature and Extent of Pauperism,' a pamphlet containing much that is deserving of attention, but in which all the evils incidental to a legal provision for the poor are exaggerated, and all its advantages overlooked. Is it fair to draw a highly-coloured picture of the improvidence, rapacity, and recklessness of the labouring classes in England, and ascribe the existence of these vices to the poor law of that country, when they are known to exist to ten times the extent, accompanied by an extremity of wretchedness of which England, thank God, offers no example, in *Ireland, where there is no poor law?*"—To this I answer, by asserting that the evils are *essential* and not *incidental*; and also by asserting, that instead of being exaggerated, they are understated, as the evidence collected by the assistant-commissioners will probably show. Considering the different state of society in England, and the very great difference of the general government in England, which is decidedly the best, and that of Ireland, which I suppose is the worst, in Europe, I think there has been no picture sufficiently highly-coloured of the recklessness of the labouring classes in England. I have no doubt but that the pauper population were the instruments of the outrages at Bristol, which have had no parallel in Ireland.

The reviewer says, "Does not this fact go far to substantiate the very reverse of Mr. Walker's proposition? The great and only instrument, in his opinion, for improving the morals and condition of the poor, is the establishment among them of a higher standard of comfort. But can there be a question that the poor laws have in England elevated that standard, or, at least, kept it from sinking to the deplorable level of mere brutal existence at which it is settled in Ireland; or the scarcely higher level of certain remoter parts of Scotland, where the poor law has never been in effective operation?"—My opinion is, that if the poor laws did not exist in England, there would be less degradation; and that if they did exist in Ireland, there would be more degradation.

All the business transacted by two Magistrates as well if not better transacted by one.

Do you think the circumstance of having two magistrates to adjudicate on questions of poor laws a necessary security, or that there would be any danger in allowing the same business that is now transacted by two magistrates to be transacted by one?—I am decidedly of opinion that all the advantages are in favour of one magistrate. I think that the less responsibility is divided the better. Where the responsibility is undivided, much more attention is given to the business. If one magistrate were allowed to do that which is now nominally done by two, much time would be saved to the parish officer, and much expense to the parishes.

Do you think there would be any danger in allowing parishes in the metropolis to remove paupers on their own responsibility, without an order from the magistrates?—I think there would be no danger; that the parishes would be more cautious when the entire responsibility was thrown upon them, and that the alteration would be a great saving of trouble and expense.

The Rev. *Rushton Robinson Bailey*, Chaplain of the Tower.

As curate of Woolbridge and Henley, in Suffolk, I have had considerable opportunities of observing the administration of the poor laws in the rural districts. When I became chaplain of the Tower, I took an interest in the administration of the poor laws in the metropolis; I became a frequent visitor of the magistrates at Lambeth-street police office. When Mr. Walker was appointed magistrate of that office, I made it a point to go whenever I had spare time, and witness the application of his mode of administering the poor laws, and frequently sat in the office whilst he heard the appeals of paupers for his interference. I was at first very much startled with the method he appeared to be taking, it being so much at variance with all I had seen and heard of the practice of magistrates

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in Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk. He always gave to every individual who applied a most attentive hearing; in most cases he explained that the poor laws were not intended for them; in some instances, where there was an apparently very strong case in favour of the applicants, he told them that he felt it his duty to leave their case to the overseers, and was confident that if they who were acquainted with the facts of the case knew it to be deserving, relief would certainly be given. From the effect of his manner, and his calm representation, the greater number went away satisfied though their claims were rejected.

Do the whole of your observations of the administration of the poor laws by Mr. Walker, enable you to express an opinion in its favour, as being such as a benevolent person, anxious for the moral welfare and improvement of the condition of the labouring classes, might wish or consent to see generally adopted?—I confess that I was prejudiced against the system, but very attentive observation has made me a convert to it. I am sure that it is conducive to the best interests of the labouring classes themselves, and to all the proper objects of benevolence. I am now equally sure, that the prevalent system of indiscriminate interference, and orders of relief by magistrates, is productive of the very opposite effects. I have seen the most abandoned characters maintained in vicious courses by magistrates acting, no doubt, most frequently from benevolent motives, though sometimes from fear and from a love of popularity. By treating the parish officers as culprits, they promote the most dangerous insubordination.

Mr. Walker is one of the few magistrates whom I have observed as treating parish officers with courtesy.

Appendix, (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.THE LAMBETH-
STREET DISTRICT

1.—WORSHIP-STREET DISTRICT.

	AMOUNT OF POOR RATE DURING								POPULATION IN	
	1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1831.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	
St. Leonard, Shoreditch -	15,753	17,991	19,538	24,485	25,514	28,934	31,735	28,901	26,905	68,564
St. Luke, Middlesex -	13,643	14,388	13,214	18,561	20,344	20,480	20,716	17,628	18,390	46,642
St. John, Hackney -	10,655	10,225	10,510	12,459	10,647	12,388	12,845	12,374	14,012	31,047
St. Matthew, Bethnal Green -	9,085	10,174	9,023	14,246	15,766	17,102	15,766	17,801	22,428	62,018
St. Mary, Islington -	7,554	10,070	9,812	11,212	14,762	14,338	17,015	15,517	16,191	37,316
Christchurch, Spitalfields -	4,093	4,840	4,235	5,581	5,787	5,541	7,848	7,705	4,671	17,949
Enfield -	3,446	3,734	3,663	4,385	3,967	4,356	4,199	4,118	4,256	8,812
Tottenham -	3,312	3,385	3,353	3,500	3,620	3,070	3,388	3,585	5,676	6,037
Edmonton -	2,883	3,116	3,838	4,251	4,098	4,930	4,220	4,313	5,192	8,192
Hornsey -	1,808	2,094	2,058	2,316	3,298	2,489	2,379	2,260	2,726	4,856
Mile-End New Town -	938	1,024	1,234	1,464	1,406	1,436	1,754	1,875	1,957	7,384
Norton Falgate -	805	775	825	956	1,078	1,065	1,299	1,299	1,310	1,918
Old Artillery-ground -	543	514	475	701	875	693	910	809	711	1,411
TOTALS - - - £.	74,508	82,330	81,778	104,117	111,162	116,822	123,014	118,185	124,425	239,524
Average of the four years - - £. 85,683.								Average of the four years - - £. 120,611.		Increase, 26 per cent.

2.—LAMBETH-STREET DISTRICT.

	AMOUNT OF POOR RATE DURING								POPULATION IN	
	1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1831.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	
St. George in the East -	10,658	11,151	16,227	12,787	16,912	14,948	15,144	16,180	15,338	38,505
Poplar and Blackwall -	9,028	8,611	8,501	9,337	9,352	10,024	10,884	10,848	11,722	16,849
St. Mary, Whitechapel -	8,212	9,270	9,947	10,191	11,490	10,638	9,681	8,125	8,961	30,733
Mile-End Old Town -	5,749	6,839	8,314	10,061	11,459	11,228	11,209	13,919	12,039	33,898
St. Anne, Limehouse -	4,932	5,302	5,706	5,700	7,151	4,920	6,742	6,295	5,988	15,695
St. Leonard, Bromley -	3,318	3,294	3,513	4,181	4,370	4,226	4,078	4,692	4,425	4,846
St. Mary, Stratford-le-Bow -	1,500	1,157	1,150	1,628	1,315	1,703	2,405	2,331	2,369	3,371
Mile-End New Town -	938	1,024	1,234	1,464	1,406	1,436	1,754	1,875	1,957	7,384
Trinity, in the Minories -	729	650	616	714	745	800	703	711	896	508
Old Artillery-ground -	543	514	475	701	875	693	910	809	711	1,411
Tower, Old, Without -	117	120	128	135	116	89	124	89	161	280
TOTALS - - - £.	45,724	47,942	55,811	56,899	65,191	60,705	63,634	65,874	64,476	153,470
Average of the four years - - £. 51,594.								Average of the four years - - £. 63,922.		Increase, 25 per cent.

(3.)—WORSHIP-STREET DISTRICT.

NAMES OF PARISHES, &c.	Number of Illegitimate Children.					Amount of Payments on account of Illegitimate Children.					Number of Out-door Poor.					Amount of Payments to Out-door Poor.					Average of Persons in the Workhouse.					Total Expenditure on account of the Poor.														
	1828		1829		1830		1831		1832		1828		1829		1830		1831		1832		1828		1829		1830		1831		1832		1828		1829		1830		1831		1832	
	Average					Average					Average					Average					Average					Average					Average					Average				
	30	45	56	54	61	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.		
Christchurch, Spitalfields	-	-	-	-	-	218	312	385	384	421	438	732	809	527	731	1,588	2,499	2,159	1,838	1,904	470	512	483	446	415	5,787	6,082	7,705	4,671	5,921	3,298	2,489	2,379	2,260	2,726					
Hornsey	-	-	-	-	-	129	94	79	58	111	894	3,192	2,080	1,228	2,754	793	928	933	834	651	90	90	90	91	90	3,298	2,489	2,379	2,260	2,726										
Enfield	-	-	-	-	-	129	94	79	58	111	894	3,192	2,080	1,228	2,754	793	928	933	834	651	90	90	90	91	90	3,298	2,489	2,379	2,260	2,726										
Edmonton	-	-	-	-	-	129	94	79	58	111	894	3,192	2,080	1,228	2,754	793	928	933	834	651	90	90	90	91	90	3,298	2,489	2,379	2,260	2,726										
John, St., Hackney	-	-	-	-	-	776	812	761	768	809	11,406	12,124	15,917	24,507	29,787	4,381	4,635	4,458	4,926	5,554	335	364	376	398	400	12,517	12,772	12,084	14,260	14,816	2,993	3,334	3,632	3,436	3,483					
Leonard, St., Shoreditch	-	-	-	-	-	167	169	116	592	269	3,984	5,625	7,812	8,268	6,267	11,831	14,068	13,105	12,117	12,582	961	835	804	806	766	2,993	3,334	3,632	3,436	3,483	2,003	1,907	2,014	1,658	1,837					
Luke, St., Middlesex	-	-	-	-	-	1,097	1,159	1,138	1,196	1,097	3,550	3,748	3,630	3,708	3,870	6,995	7,412	7,145	7,332	7,790	625	633	627	613	640	18,328	21,748	22,023	25,367	28,617	18,328	21,748	22,023	25,367	28,617					
Mary, St., Islington	-	-	-	-	-	610	644	670	712	717	495	528	510	590	606	3,604	3,819	3,884	5,161	7,107	496	506	540	512	566	18,328	21,748	22,023	25,367	28,617	18,328	21,748	22,023	25,367	28,617					
Matthew, St., Bethnal Green	-	-	-	-	-	104	99	91	88	72	70	70	75	80	85	567	619	630	637	636	20	21	18	16	16	1,143	1,203	1,041	1,248	1,214	1,143	1,203	1,041	1,248	1,214					
Mile-End New Town	-	-	-	-	-	14	12	9	8	72	70	70	75	80	85	567	619	630	637	636	20	21	18	16	16	1,143	1,203	1,041	1,248	1,214	1,143	1,203	1,041	1,248	1,214					
Norton Falgate	-	-	-	-	-	14	12	9	8	72	70	70	75	80	85	567	619	630	637	636	20	21	18	16	16	1,143	1,203	1,041	1,248	1,214	1,143	1,203	1,041	1,248	1,214					
Old Artillery Ground	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	40	36	37	35	284	317	262	274	256	19	23	17	18	15	793	943	876	879	859	91,828	97,655	102,591	109,549	107,322					
TOTALS	-	-	-	-	-	3,101	3,289	3,240	3,598	3,496	20,863	26,059	30,869	38,946	44,135	30,063	34,297	32,576	33,619	36,490	3016	2984	2955	2900	2908	91,828	97,655	102,591	109,549	107,322	91,828	97,655	102,591	109,549	107,322					

^a Number of bastard children sworn. ^b Amount paid by reputed fathers. ^c This comprises the whole of the expenditure of the trustees of the poor, except the county rate, police rate, jury lists, census, &c. &c. not strictly applicable to the poor. ^d The whole amount expended as poor-rates, including every description of payment out of that fund, county rates, police rates, &c. ^e This sum includes every expense attending on the Poor Board.

(4.)—LAMBETH-STREET DISTRICT.

NAMES OF PARISHES, &c.	Number of Illegitimate Children.					Amount of Payments on account of Illegitimate Children.					Number of Out-door Poor.					Amount of Payments to Out-door Poor.					Average of Persons in the Workhouse.					Total Expenditure on account of the Poor.									
	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.					
						£.	£.	£.	£.	£.						£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.						
Poplar	-	-	-	-	-	-	282	290	296	270	507	633	650	661	589	1,497	1,928	1,949	1,988	1,846	172	190	198	155	150	9,352	10,024	10,884	10,848	11,732					
Anne, St., Limehouse	-	33	42	43	39	237	708	675	676	764	1,660	1,650	1,740	1,950	2,250	4,402	4,390	4,775	5,153	5,928	742	872	734	724	763	14,340	15,582	16,180	15,238	5,689					
George, St., Middlesex	-	134	111	113	144	721	708	675	676	764	1,660	1,650	1,740	1,950	2,250	4,402	4,390	4,775	5,153	5,928	742	872	734	724	763	14,340	15,582	16,180	15,238	16,314					
Leonard, St., Bromley	-	24	25	26	26	157	163	172	169	158	217	217	213	259	259	2,008	2,475	2,659	2,722	2,535	37	47	39	49	37	4,421	4,380	5,204	5,764	5,165					
Mary, St., Stratford Bow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2607	2673	2725	2710	2677	3,450	3,736	3,723	3,477	3,473	680	597	488	452	502	b 10547	b 9,413	b 7,809	b 8,439	b 7,871					
Mary, St., Whitechapel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-					
Mile-End New Town	-	124	146	163	176	177	618	785	924	1,035	947	726	823	923	974	936	3,802	3,993	4,234	4,736	5,165	380	474	461	385	438	c 10906	c 10250	c 13636	c 11186	c 14497				
Mile-End Old Town	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	45	36	37	35	284	317	262	274	256	19	23	17	18	15	d 793	d 943	d 876	d 879	d 859				
Old Artillery Ground	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-					
Tower, Old, Without	-	-	-	-	-	1,733	1,938	2,061	2,176	2,139	3,743	4,036	4,287	4,691	4,746	15,443	16,839	17,582	18,350	19,203	2030	2203	1937	1783	1905	55,330	56,929	60,750	57,927	62,107					
TOTALS	-	315	324	345	369	386	1,733	1,938	2,061	2,176	2,139	3,743	4,036	4,287	4,691	4,746	15,443	16,839	17,582	18,350	19,203	2030	2203	1937	1783	1905	55,330	56,929	60,750	57,927	62,107				

^a This is the number of poor relieved during a corresponding week in each year, but does not include their families. ^b This includes payments to the out-door poor, and expense of maintaining the poor in the workhouse, but not other charges incident to the poor, such as beads, salaries, stationery, &c. ^c This does not include salaries, police and county rates, or anything that does not appertain to the relief of the poor. ^d This includes every expense attending on the Poor Board.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.EFFECTS OF THE
INTERFERENCE OF
MAGISTRATES.EFFECTS OF THE ACTIVE INTERFERENCE OF MAGISTRATES WITH RELATION TO THE
ADMINISTRATION OF RELIEF TO THE POOR.

THE evidence with relation to the modes of administering relief to the poor adopted by the officers of the parishes within the two magisterial districts of the Worship-street and of the Lambeth-street police offices, in so far as those modes are not distinguished from the common administration of relief in other parishes, does not perhaps require any explanatory observations from me; but in so far as the two districts are distinguished by the opposite methods pursued by the acting magistrates of the two offices, I shall endeavour to set forth what I consider to be the results of their respective modes of proceeding, so far as they may be deduced from such information as I have collected.

Mr. Walker came into office in the year 1828, and the practice which he now pursues of declining to interfere with the parish officers in the administration of relief, was shortly after adopted. On an examination of the Parliamentary Returns of the expenditure on the poor within each district during the four years preceding, and also during the four years succeeding that in which Mr. Walker came into office, and magisterial interference ceased within the Lambeth-street district, it appears that the total amount of poor's-rates paid, was, in the district of the magistrates of

	During the four years preceding.	During the succeeding four years.	Being an increase over the preceding period of
Lambeth-street	£. 51,594	£. 63,922	24 per cent.
Worship-street	85,683	120,061	43 per cent.*

It may be said that the Worship-street district comprehends many districts naturally poorer; it comprehends the parishes of Bethnall Green and Christchurch, Spitalfields; but if the pauperism in the district popularly known by the name of Spitalfields, is heavier than that in most of the parishes within the Lambeth-street district, the mismanagement and jobbing, and factitious causes of pauperism, (as may have been observed in the evidence already given, and as will be further seen in the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Stone, subsequently given under the head of CHARITIES,) have in every respect been much greater, otherwise the lower rate of increase of pauperism in the Lambeth-street district, from the year 1824 to the year 1827, whilst both districts were under similar magisterial control, would show evidence of a difference of circumstances in favour of that district. It is also to be observed, that the elements of poverty cannot be presumed to have been altered within the same district during the two periods. The rates of increase of the first year over the last year of each of the two periods examined, was, in the district of the magistrates at

Lambeth-street:

In the year 1827 over the year 1824, an increase of	-	-	-	-	24 $\frac{5}{8}$ per cent.
In 1832 over 1829, an increase of	-	-	-	-	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Worship-street:

In the year 1827 over the year 1824, an increase of	-	-	-	-	39 $\frac{5}{7}$ per cent.
In 1832 over 1829, an increase of	-	-	-	-	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

In three of the large parishes comprehended within the Worship-street district (namely, in Shoreditch, St. Luke's, and Spitalfields), very considerable exertions were made by the parish officers to check the progress of the system, and they succeeded in reducing their aggregate expenditure from 60,299*l.* in 1830 to 49,974*l.* in 1832. I cannot doubt their statements that they would have carried their reductions much farther, if the undeserving paupers had derived no support from the system of procedure adopted by the magistrates.

The best criterion of
the progress of
pauperism.

But the money payments represent very loosely and imperfectly the progress of pauperism. The best criterion I consider is derivable from the comparison of the numbers relieved. It will be obvious that the money payments may remain stationary, or may diminish, as was the case in Cookham before the reformation of the administration of relief, whilst from the reduced price of commodities, the bread or produce distributed, has been increased.

In many of the parishes where I have found that the pecuniary burthens of the rates have been reduced, I have found that the reductions have been made chiefly in the incidental expenses; extravagant salaries have been curtailed, litigation has been checked, jobbing in the

* The increase of population has been, in the Lambeth-street district, at the rate of about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, from the year 1821 to the year 1831. In the Worship-street district, the increase has been a little more; but during the period in question the duties on soap, leather, candles, &c have been removed, and the prices of supplies have been so greatly reduced, as more than to countervail the increase of population.

the supplies of goods has been restrained, without any alteration having been made in the condition of the pauper; without the inducements to pauperism having been diminished. In some instances a reduction has been made in the allowances to the out-door poor. In these cases the check is but temporary, for the interest of the pauper in clamouring for an increase, and the tendency of the allowances or variations in the way of indulgence to particular individuals to diffusion over the whole mass of paupers, are so strong, as to overcome the efforts of ordinary individuals to repress them, and hence it usually is, that where energetic individuals, who have effected reductions in parochial expenditure, withdraw their control, the parish relapses so speedily into its former condition.

For the purpose of comparing the effects of the two systems in question, I requested that returns should be made of the *numbers of individuals* receiving relief, or of cases relieved within each of the parishes of the two districts. These returns have not been made by all of the parishes within each district, and those which have been made are not all regular in their form, but so far as they go they will serve to illustrate the preceding statements.

During the following years

	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	
The total Numbers of Out-door Poor in Eight Parishes of the Worship-street District were -	20,863	28,059	30,869	38,946	44,135	
	24 $\frac{9}{10}$ {					18 $\frac{11}{20}$
						26 $\frac{1}{6}$
						13 $\frac{1}{3}$
						47 $\frac{25}{20}$
						86 $\frac{7}{10}$
						111 $\frac{11}{20}$
						Increase per cent. on the preceding year.
						Increase per cent. on the year 1828.

During the same years

	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	
The total Numbers of Out-door Poor within Six Parishes of the Lambeth-street District were	3,743	4,036	4,297	4,591	4,746	
	7 $\frac{5}{8}$ {					6 $\frac{9}{20}$
						6 $\frac{5}{7}$
						3 $\frac{4}{11}$
						14 $\frac{7}{9}$
						22 $\frac{2}{3}$
						26 $\frac{1}{9}$
						Increase per cent. on the preceding year.
						Increase per cent. on the year 1828.

During these years, the total numbers of the paupers within the workhouse have not materially varied.

Now on referring to the Returns (3 & 4), it will be seen that the total amount of money expended in all the parishes from which the above numbers of the out-door paupers have been obtained was, in the district of

	1828.	1832.	
Worship-street - -	£.91,828	£.107,322	Increase from 1828 to 1832, 16 $\frac{3}{9}$ p' cent.
Lambeth-street - -	53,330	62,107	- - - - - 16 $\frac{4}{9}$ p' cent.

The progress in numbers of cases compared with the pecuniary burthen.

So that while the money progress has been little more than 16 per cent. in the parishes of both districts last referred to, the progress *in numero* has been 26 per cent. in the Lambeth-street district, and 111 per cent. in the Worship-street district. In the later Parliamentary Returns, the accounts of the numbers of paupers have been entirely omitted, and we are consequently deprived of the best data for estimating the progress of pauperism. Had these returns been continued, I believe it would have been found that there are few districts which would not have exhibited very striking differences between the progress *in numero* and the progress of the pecuniary burthen. In further illustration of the irregularity which I have frequently found in the relative progression of the one and the other, I would refer to the returns from the three large parishes of St. Lukes, Shoreditch and Spitalfields, where the pecuniary progress of the rates has been checked. The increase or diminution per cent. *in numero* or in money from year to year is shown in the following summary:

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.EFFECTS OF THE
INTERFERENCE OF
MAGISTRATES.

YEARS.	PROGRESS				EXCESS of the RATE OF INCREASE.	
	In Expenditure.		In Number of Paupers.		Of Money over Numbers.	Of Numbers over Money.
	Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.		
1828 to 1829 - -	6 $\frac{3}{5}$	- -	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	- -	- -	3 $\frac{9}{10}$
1829 to 1830 - -	9 $\frac{1}{8}$	- -	16 $\frac{1}{2}$	- -	- -	7 $\frac{7}{8}$
— to 1830 - -	16 $\frac{3}{4}$	- -	40 $\frac{1}{2}$	- -	- -	23 $\frac{3}{4}$
1830 to 1831 - -	- -	10 $\frac{1}{20}$	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	- -	- -	11 $\frac{6}{10}$
— to 1831 - -	5	- -	42 $\frac{1}{2}$	- -	- -	37 $\frac{1}{2}$
1831 to 1832 - -	- -	7 $\frac{6}{7}$	- -	11 $\frac{5}{7}$	3 $\frac{6}{7}$	—
— to 1832 - -	- -	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 $\frac{9}{10}$	- -	- -	29 $\frac{3}{10}$

Thus it may be seen, that from 1828 to 1829 the progress in expenditure was 6 $\frac{3}{5}$ per cent.; the progress in the numbers of paupers was at the rate of 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., being a higher rate of progress in the numbers of paupers by 3 $\frac{6}{10}$ per cent.: so from 1828 to 1830, the excess of the progress in numbers was 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. over the progress in money.

*The interference of
the Magistrates
abolished.*

In the several populous parishes comprehended within the Lambeth-street district, the interference of the magistrates in the general administration of relief is practically abolished; those parishes are in the situation in which they would be, if the right of interference on the part of the magistrates were abolished by statute; and the question which occurs appears to me to be, What (judging from the experience within these and other districts) would be the results in similar districts, if the interference of the magistrates, and all appeal to them, as to the distribution of relief to the indigent, were disallowed by the Legislature?

*Results of the aboli-
tion: pecuniary
saving.*

The first effect, as deduced from the evidence, is an important pecuniary saving, from the absence of paupers of the description of those who, in the Worship-street district, are described as having been driven upon the parish "in troops."

*Apparent pecuniary
loss from Magiste-
rial interference.*

If, as I believe all the evidence tends to show, and all the officers of the parishes in the Worship-street district would testify, and as I see no reason to doubt, the excess of the rate of increase within that district, above the rate of increase in the Lambeth-street district, is ascribable to the system pursued by the magistrates, then the cost of that system to the whole of the parishes included in the district was 48,547 l. 6s. 8d. during the period of four years, or 12,136 l. 6s. 8d. per annum, at the rate of increase beyond the rate of increase in the Lambeth-street district during the same period. If for the latter district 43 per cent. be taken as the standard of progression, then the whole of the parishes in Lambeth-street have, during the period referred to, saved 44,588 l. 1s. 4d., or per annum, 11,147 l. 5s. 4d. As one of the officers of a parish within the Worship-street district expressed it, the other parishes would find it worth their while to pay to the magistrates double their salaries not to act in parochial cases. If, during the 14 years that Mr. Benett has been in office, the rate of increase had been not more than 24 instead of 43 per cent., it may be safely pronounced that enough of money would have been saved to have given a good education to the whole of the labouring classes within the district.

*Diminution of
crime.*

In the next place, we may take into account the gain in the probable diminution of crime.

The change of system in the dispauperized districts has been marked by a diminution of crime. The paupers and labourers in the parish gravel-pits were notorious as poachers and pilferers. Being driven to honest labour for subsistence, they had proportionately less leisure and less temptations for dishonest courses. The bad characters of a considerable proportion of the able-bodied paupers receiving out-door allowances on the orders of the magistrates within the Worship-street district, cannot have escaped observation. The 6d. per diem, or "the regulars," which is awarded as the most scanty allowance which humanity could permit to be given, appears to be just enough to preserve an indolent and vicious man from the necessity of seeking to maintain himself by regular industry, and yet keep him with an appetite whetted for depredation.

*Able management
not impeded by the
Magistrates.*

A further benefit derivable from the absence of magisterial interference, is, that wherever a man of remarkable energy and ability comes into office in a parish, with clear views of amendment, and a determination to pursue it, he meets with no other obstacles than those which may arise from the ignorance, or mistaken views, or sinister interests of his colleagues, the resistance of the paupers, and the misdirected sympathies of the inhabitants.

*Absolute refusal of
relief to able-bodied
claimants.*

All these advantages are to be considered as derivable from rather than as necessarily produced by the change. Before I further advert to the evidence as to the extent to which they might be expected to be actually derived from such a change, I request attention to the effects indicated from the occasional absolute refusal of relief to able-bodied claimants.

The officers of one or two of the parishes within the Lambeth-street district, instead of presenting to all applicants a mode of relief which the undeserving will decline, but which the really destitute will accept, have occasionally, but only occasionally, taken advantage of

of the non-interference of the magistrates to refuse relief altogether to some persons. When the reductions which had been effected in the parish of Whitechapel were pointed out to the officers of some of the adjacent districts, they have frequently alleged that the reductions in that parish were occasioned mainly by driving out the poor into adjacent districts. I found, however, that Mr. Waite was prepared to prove that a large proportion of the persons who had ceased to be burthensome to the parish, continued to reside there, and obtain their livelihoods by honest industry. On the other hand, the officers who stated that the paupers had been got rid of by driving them out, could not sustain their statement by any instances of vagrancy or suffering having been occasioned by the practice. But it is the custom for these paupers to appeal to the lord mayor, and I think that the evidence with relation to those appeals, indicates the inconveniences which would result if parish officers, in consequence of the non-interference of the magistrates, were absolutely to refuse relief in any considerable number of cases. The following is the testimony which I received with relation to these appeals :

Mr. Robert Harris, Assistant-clerk at the Lord Mayor's Justice Room, examined.

[The witness, whose duty it is to make out the examinations of paupers, the orders of removal, affiliation, and transact other business of the office connected with the relief of the poor, corroborated the evidence of the chief clerk with reference to it.]

" Do not a considerable number of the casual poor belonging to other districts apply for relief to the lord mayor?—Yes; especially from Whitechapel. The poor come to the Mansion-house from all quarters; persons who can establish no regular claim to relief; such as persons who were born in our colonial dependencies, and have never obtained any settlement in England; foreigners who have been thrown in a state of destitution upon the metropolis; Lascars and others, the crews of vessels which have departed without them, usually apply at the Mansion-house to the lord mayor, under the notion that he possesses extraordinary powers and resources; but the greatest number come from the adjacent parish of Whitechapel and other parishes within the district of the police magistrates at Lambeth-street.

" What is the nature of the cases on which the paupers from the Lambeth-street district usually make application?—They usually allege that they have been absolutely refused relief, or that the relief given them is entirely insufficient for their subsistence. They state that they have been absolutely refused by the overseers, and on applying at the police-office at Lambeth-street they have been refused admission to the magistrates by the officers, or else if they have succeeded in obtaining admission, that they have been sent away by the magistrate without redress.

" What is done with such cases at the Mansion-house?—The lord mayors usually hear their statements, and give them some pecuniary relief, sometimes out of their own private purses; sometimes they send an officer with them (where the pauper has been excluded from the presence of the magistrate) to request that the case may be heard. In courtesy to the lord mayor the cases, as we hear, are usually attended to, but we sometimes have them back again, stating that they can get no relief, or have been put off with relief which is merely nominal. When the overseers and the magistrate have both absolutely refused relief, the case becomes one of considerable difficulty.

The lord mayors sometimes give money to the appellants.

" What course is then taken?—Sometimes the lord mayor threatens to write to the Secretary of State to complain of the magistrate, or he gives the pauper money. The present lord mayor does this, and he deplors his inability to do more. He frequently tells the pauper to go to the house of the overseer or the magistrate, and, says his lordship, " if he wont attend to you, go into his parlour, and if he is at dinner, sit down and dine with him; that is what I would do if I were in your place."

" So far as your experience and observation would enable you to form an opinion, what is the character of the mass of these applicants?—I should certainly say that 19 cases out of 20 were cases of imposition. In some of the cases the existing distress is real, but on investigating the causes, it generally turns out that the paupers were brought into it by flagrant idleness, or a persevering course of extravagance and intemperance. They nevertheless consider that they have a legal and moral right to relief. As Mr. Hobler is accustomed to observe, they look upon it as their freehold estate, and come regularly to receive their rents.

" Do you consider then the entire refusal of these applicants an eligible course?—No; as compared with setting them to work, or placing them in a well-regulated workhouse, I think it an extremely improper course. I think there can be no doubt that if the same method of proceeding were adopted at all the other police offices, the evil of mendicity and vagrancy would be greatly aggravated."

" You think then that it would give force to the imposter's plea of impending starvation?—Yes, certainly; as it does so now, even with our magistrates, who fill the office of mayor, and have, as magistrates, more than ordinary experience of cases of imposition; it would of course do so much more effectually with people who have no such experience."

" Do you happen to know what effect the practice has upon mendicity?—No, I cannot speak as to its effect with any degree of accuracy; and, indeed, I should suppose that the precise practice is hardly sufficiently known, even within the Lambeth-street district, to produce any very material effect."

Appendix (A.)

The last answer of the witness is corroborated by other inquiries which I have made on the subject.

Inexpediency of the discretionary power of absolutely refusing relief.

It is to be observed, that the cases in which relief was absolutely refused to the applicants bore a small proportion to the other cases; but a wide range of evidence appears to me to leave little doubt, that if the fact of the absolute refusal to give relief were very generally known, in the present state of public feeling, the smallness of the number of cases in which it occurs would but little diminish the effect of the practice as a stimulus to mendicity. The proportion of the cases of an absolute refusal of any relief whatever being small, the cost of affording relief in such cases in the workhouse, imperfectly regulated as most of the workhouses within the district appear to be, would be comparatively small; but the general character of the applicants forms a presumption that still fewer would accept relief even upon such terms. The pecuniary gain from the absolute refusal of relief would scarcely be an equivalent for the other inconveniences which it would produce.

I cannot but consider Mr. Walker fortunate that no case of death, apparently from starvation, occurred in any of the instances where relief was absolutely refused by the parish officers, and where he refused to interfere with their decision. The experience of his district and other districts shows, that if the parish officers were armed with the formidable discretionary power of refusing relief absolutely, there are very few individuals who would incur the responsibility to popular opinion. It must be recollected, that to refuse relief to a man who has not *apparently* wherewithal to maintain himself, will appear to the majority of persons a possible or probable sentence of starvation, or, in other words, a sentence of death, inflicted at the discretion of a parish officer; a possibility to be averted by alms-giving. Hence the known exercise of the power of absolutely refusing relief must necessarily act as a licence to mendicity; and appears so to have acted upon the City magistrates.

In reviewing the evidence with relation to the change made within the Lambeth-street district, it must be remembered, that the witnesses are parish officers, and that it relieves them from the insolence of sturdy paupers, who, under the magisterial control, on the rejection of their demands, threatened to make the officers answer for the refusal as defendants "before their betters." By placing the paupers at the mercy of the parish officers, suppliancy and entreaty are substituted for menaces and actual violence. In other respects the change relieves those officers from many personal inconveniences, and the addition of much personal civility on the part of the magistrate, must dispose them to give excessive praise to his practice, and make exaggerated statements of its beneficial effects. The greater proportion of the parish officers of this district whom I examined were solicitous to impress upon me, that although they were left to their own discretion as to the nature and amount of the relief they would give, yet they rarely if ever refused relief, and never took "an unfair advantage" of the pauper, and never drove him to extremities. It was usually on the ground of insolence or offensiveness of behaviour, and not of his being able-bodied and capable of obtaining his own livelihood, that he was refused, or threatened to be refused relief. These statements were fully corroborated by the amount of the rates of the parishes, and the progressive increase of their paupers. In fact, with the exception of Whitechapel, in which (as compared with other places where amendment has been introduced) the improvement has been but partial, the general condition of most of the parishes did not appear to me to differ obviously from the ordinary condition of other parishes where the magisterial control was exercised.

In most districts, statements are made from year to year, that the present year is the least prosperous that was ever known; but I could not perceive anything in the general condition of the population of the Lambeth-street district to warrant any increase of the rates. Mr. Walker was accustomed to state from the bench, that no honest man, able to work, need want work, at good wages. From such an examination as I was enabled to give to the parochial management, it appeared to me that a reduction of one-third the amount of their expenditure might be made under such modes of administration of relief as I have seen elsewhere in practice, and due provision be made for all who are really destitute.

The abolition of the magistrates right of interference would of itself effect but little good.

But, if the absence of magisterial interference will leave good management to its full sway wherever it may chance to arise, it at the same time equally leaves all the pervading bad management to its full career. The withdrawal of the magisterial interference would not make all the parochial officers intelligent, neither would it remove their sinister interests against improvement; moreover, whilst it withdrew the weapon of intimidation derived by the pauper from the form of appeal to the magistrates, it would leave unchecked the other modes of intimidation which have of late been brought into operation. As the present audit of the parochial accounts is confessedly a mere formality, the control or interference with *bad* management is rarely exercised, and practically the interference generally takes place only when demanded by paupers where the management is strict. The parish officers might of themselves give relief to the undeserving claimants fixed upon the parishes by the orders of the magistrate. By lax management parish officers equally avoid complaint and interference, until the magnitude of the burthens which they have imposed rouse some individuals to exertions for the preservation of their property: the majority of those who have interposed are the chief landowners in the parishes dispauperised. Those exertions are seldom successful, unless made by persons of considerable energy and of rare ability; it is rare that such persons have any special interest, and any considerable diminution of the evil from the mere abrogation of the interference of the magistrates, can therefore be rarely expected.

The

The results manifested in the two districts in question are corroborated by the results of similar proceedings in other districts. It will be found, on reference to the answers of the queries circulated by the Board (if we may judge from the proportion of parish officers who do not answer in the affirmative the query as to the expediency of restricting the power of the magistrates to order relief out of the workhouses), that in a considerable number of parishes the magistrates do not interfere vexatiously, or enter into courses which the parish officers think ought not to be pursued, and which consequently they (the parish officers) would not themselves pursue if left to their own discretion. When I was in Berkshire I was given to understand that the acting magistrates of the Maidenhead Bench concur in general opinions as to the administration of the Poor Laws with Mr. John Sawyer and the Rev. Mr. Whately (whose proceedings in dispauperizing their respective parishes have been already stated), who are members of that bench, and would no doubt give active support to proceedings similar to their own in other parishes. Another division in the county, I believe, is situated in the same manner with respect to the disposition of the majority of the acting magistrates. Yet in these districts, where the magistrates were disposed to interfere actively for the promotion of a sound system of administration, and also in the more numerous districts, where the magistrates act as Mr. Walker has acted, that is, by avoiding any exercise whatever of their authority, acting "as if there were no law at all" on the subject, and never interfering with the parish officers, except when driven to interfere, the parishes comprehended are alike undistinguished by any marked superiority in their condition, or by that decided diminution of pauperism which has been confidently anticipated from the repeal of the statutory provisions authorizing the interference of the magistrates. In all these cases where the magistrates have not interfered actively, and where no special cause for the amount of pauperism is manifested, the progress of the rates may be ascribed to the administration of the parish officers, (wherever it is not ascribable to erroneous measures over which the individuals administering relief have little or no control,) the non-exercise of the functions of the magistrates being mostly equivalent to their non-existence.

The districts where magistrates do not interfere unmarked by any checks to the progress of pauperism.

No one can proceed far in such an inquiry without being struck with the general prevalence of the disposition to shift recklessly both pecuniary burthens and the imputations of blame. From the comparison of such districts as those of Worship-street and Lambeth-street, I think it will appear that the interference of the magistrates is not, as frequently ascribed, the sole cause of the increase; but that to the extent to which the interference takes place it is only *contributory* to the increase. Thus, if we may rely on the statistic returns, the increase of rates in the Worship-street district ascribable to the system pursued by the magistrates is 19 per cent. during the period of four years, or less than five per cent. per annum; whereas the parish officers, by adopting such modes of management as have been acted upon in the parish of St. Giles's, where the rates have been reduced in the manner already stated; and in the parish of St. George's, Hanover-square, where the rates have been considerably diminished, might within the same district reduce their rates more than one-third; and as I conceive also, by steadily giving all relief in kind or in work upon sound principles, might very considerably diminish the rate of increase from the magistrate's orders. The continuance of not less than one-third of the *existing* burthen of poor's rates may, in such districts, be ascribed to the *systems* of administering relief used by the parish officers; whilst about five per cent. of the annual increase of burthens may be ascribed to the *system* of magisterial interference.

On a review of the circumstances of the introduction of the allowance system by the magistrates of the preceding generation, it may be submitted that all that can be fairly alleged against them is, that they were not before their age; but when reference is made to the speeches of the most distinguished and popular members of the Legislature at that period, and for some years subsequent, it cannot, I submit, be justly said that the magistrates were behind their age. If at the present time, with the evidence of the evil effects of that system, and of the mischiefs of interference before them, they still clung to the exercise of pernicious functions; if they opposed the requisite changes of the system, or withheld their aid to remove the evils which it has created, they would doubtless justify the blame which has been cast upon them; but I feel it my duty to state, that I believe that the great majority of the magistrates, in the districts which have been assigned to me for examination, are inclined to support an extensive change: the most able witnesses whom I met with as expositors of the mischiefs of the system, and of the necessity of withdrawing all local discretionary power, are magistrates; the majority of the persons who have dispauperised parishes, and introduced those beneficial amendments of the mode of administering relief, which the Legislature will probably extend to all parts of the country, and render permanent, are magistrates. It is true, however, that these amendments, or at least the amendments effected by those magistrates with whom I had the honour to communicate, were not effected by them in their capacity of magistrates, but in the capacity of vestrymen. I do not recollect having met with an instance of one important improvement effected by these same gentlemen by active interference from the bench. In that position their best service to Poor Law administration, was the abstinence from interference. The bench is suited to the administration of justice; and not to the management and control of any continuous business. For the good administration of relief, a continuous view of the results of the operations in *classes* of cases is requisite, and the greater the extent of the results surveyed, the more correct of course will be the practical rules deduced from them. Usually it is only single and isolated cases, or small groups of cases that are submitted to the magistrate for his management when sitting on the bench. We have constantly had to contend with dangerous errors consequent upon generalizing, from the experience, (usually partial) of a single parish, to the whole kingdom,

The bench unsuited to any functions but those of a judicial character.

Appendix (C.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.EFFECTS OF THE
INTERFERENCE OF
MAGISTRATES.Change of the ma-
gistrates' position
for the exercise of
authority recom-
mended.

as to what remedial measures ought or ought not to be adopted. But the generalisations from the particular cases presented to the magistrates to the administration of the relief to whole parishes, are perhaps practically worse. Even in cases of pauper appeals from a decision on an existing rule, which it is not intended to alter, it is found that under the ordinary procedure, the bench is too far removed from the means of viewing the whole of the facts requisite to form a sound decision. (See the evidence of Mr. Waite as to the course of paupers to enforce exorbitant demands, *ante*, p. 138: Mr. Townsend, p. 154: Mr. Serjeant, *post*.) So much are the mischievous courses complained of, the result of mere position, that I can entertain little doubt that if the magistrates who actively interfere in parochial management were to change places for a time with those with whom they interfere, that the majority of both parties would pursue very nearly the same course, for which they now blame each other.

Although in the performance of my duties I have met with instances of very great ability in persons of all ranks, yet the greater proportion of witnesses of the most distinguished ability in the rural districts, were undoubtedly found amongst the magistrates, as might be expected from their superior education and leisure. I need not enforce the importance of retaining the beneficial services of such individuals. I submit that the course of change indicated by the evidence, is a change of the position in which they will superintend the management of the rates, and that that change should be from the seat of justice to the board of guardians for the administration of the relief to the poor. In the confidence that in the latter position they would render the most valuable services, I have ventured to suggest that the magistrates should be rendered *virtute officii* members of all local boards of guardians in any newly incorporated districts, where, with the advantage of rules deduced from the greatest extent of experience and observation, not of any one district, but of the whole kingdom, they would doubtless act with the same public advantage with which men of their information and rank have been accustomed to act, as members of some of the boards of the incorporated hundreds; as well as in the vestries of the parishes which they have dispauperised.

ST. PAUL, SHADWELL, (MIDDLESEX.)

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.		
Population - -		8,828	9,855	9,557	9,544.		
		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
		£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }		3,253	4,489	4,862	3,792	4,488	5,194

James Serjeant, Assistant Overseer of St. Paul's, Shadwell.

I SERVED two years as overseer of the parish in my own right; during the seven years subsequent, I have served as assistant overseer; I am also the relieving overseer. None of the overseers pay except upon my order. My salary is 80 guineas per annum; that, however, would not pay me for the time I expend, if I had not got a private business as a tailor.

Before I was appointed great frauds were committed by paupers obtaining relief from different overseers; and the overseers being tradesmen, who could not afford to sacrifice their time to make the requisite investigations, they necessarily knew nothing about the poor, and went out of office before they had time to learn. The appointment of an assistant overseer, or of some such permanent officer, if tolerably qualified, will be found of the greatest importance to parishes; but whatever officer is appointed, he should have full power to act, and should be independent of any interference of the annual officers in particular cases. The duty of the annual officers should be to watch and control him in his general conduct; if he abused the powers entrusted to him, the entire responsibility should be with him; and the annual officers should have no power of interfering in particular cases. Where the appointments of assistant overseers have failed, it has usually been because they have not had sufficient powers, and have been merely the servants acting under the orders of inexperienced annual officers. I was appointed because it was considered that, as I was a tradesman, I might sit at the board as an equal, with whom they might act more agreeably, and to whom they might pay a deference which they would not otherwise pay to a person who would be considered a servant if he had merely the office to depend upon. Tradesmen, when in business, are apt to send away the deserving poor impatiently, whilst they yield and give money to persevering vagrants. For this reason I consider that the interference of the magistrates is requisite where annual officers act, when it would not be requisite if respectable permanent officers, with proper powers, were always appointed.

Although

Why assistant
overseers fail.

Although a number of houses have been pulled down in our parish, the burthen of the poor have not been diminished thereby. We give no relief to able-bodied men whom we know to be in employment. We have, amongst our out-door, a number of persons whose employment is precarious, such as watermen, labourers in the docks and by the water-side; we give them temporary relief, from 2s. to 3s. and 4s. per week, which enables them to seek work.

If these men obtained work during the week, would this allowance be reduced?—If I knew him to have two days' work he would never get any relief from me.

How do you know that they obtain work; or what mode have you of detecting them?—By constant visiting at their houses; besides my constant visiting, I receive information from other paupers who apply to me for relief.

What is the number of the able-bodied persons out of employment whom you have on your books receiving out-door relief?—From 12 to 14.

You consider, then, that the decision of the select vestry, in matters of relief, ought not to be final?—I decidedly disapprove of the practice adopted at Lambeth-street, of leaving the poor to the mercy of the parish officers.

Decidedly disapprove of the poor being left at the mercy of parish-officers.

How many cases have occurred, during the last year, in which you may have refused relief to applicants, on the ground of their being bad characters, being drunken or undeserving, or, as you believed, not in real want?—Perhaps about 30.

Were those refusals grounded on a complete knowledge of the characters and circumstances of the applicants?—Yes.

You only refuse in very flagrant cases, and do so in perfect assurance, from the evidence you have before you, that no mischiefs would result from the refusal?—Yes.

Can you give an instance?—Some days ago a coal-heaver, named Joseph Somers, applied for relief for himself and his family; I refused it, on the ground that he was in work, and was a general drunken character.

What was your evidence that he was in work?—I had seen him coming home almost every night with the fresh coal-dust upon his face, and with his pipe in his mouth, and frequently reeling under the influence of liquor.

Did you state your ground of refusal to the magistrate?—Yes, I did, and that he was a drunken, dissipated character.

What did the magistrate say to this case?—He told me to relieve the wife and family; and that if I could prove that the husband was at work a warrant would be granted against him, to show cause why he would not support his family.

Did you relieve this family?—Oh yes.

Did you attempt to obtain technical evidence of the man's being at work?—How was I to do this, Sir? A coal-heaver works one day on one vessel, and one day on another. It would be impossible for me to ascertain what part of the river he was at work at, or what he earned, or to get the people to come to prove it.

Impossible to obtain technical evidence of a man being at work.

When you say it was impossible, do you mean that it was impossible without an extent of labour which would make the proof cost more than the amount of relief given?—No, Sir; simply that it was absolutely impossible.

Is this a specimen of all the other cases in which relief was refused by you?—Yes.

Were the decisions of the magistrates similar in the other cases?—Yes, they were nearly the same.

In the case you have instanced, you would have deemed the evidence of the man's being at work such as you could act upon with safety?—Certainly.

If such technical evidence is required before a parish officer could be entitled to refuse relief, would relief be often refused?—Certainly not with those characters.

How many persons have served office as overseers since you have been in office?—About 16.

Of these, how many did you consider were men harshly disposed towards the poor?—I scarcely believe that there was one; in general, their fault was a disposition to excessive liberality or over-indulgence.

Disposition of the majority of overseers to be over liberal with the rates.

Do you say that they would not have been so disposed, any of them, after the service of their office; after they had become conversant with the characters of the paupers?—Certainly not.

Do you then think that they would neither allow their annual officers to act with undue severity towards the poor, nor use any themselves, whatever might be their interest in keeping down the rates?—I think they would not.

Would you expect, in a similar parish, where the annual officers were similarly elected, officers much of the same character as your own?—Yes.

In the instance you have mentioned as an example of some of the cases you have had before the magistrates, was your knowledge and investigation rendered useless?—Yes.

The appeal in those instances then is, according to your statement, an appeal from a person who has the best evidence or knowledge which the nature of the case will allow, to the magistrate.

strates against the decision of the parish-officers.

Such appeal must be decided on the worst evidence.

Conclusion against an appeal to the magistrates.

to a person who has less knowledge, or no knowledge whatever, of the facts, (further than the claimant's own statement), and to whom better evidence cannot be given?—That is a correct statement of the fact.

Such appeals therefore must, of necessity, be decided by the magistrate without the knowledge of the best evidence of which the case will admit, and therefore probably in many instances erroneously?—Certainly; and the only protection is in giving the paupers work, which, neither in our parish nor in others similarly situated, can be got in sufficient quantity.

If, then, a board of unpaid officers, elected by the inhabitants, which board was formed, as it necessarily would be, of persons of the character you describe, “disposed to excessive liberality or over-indulgence rather than undue severity, whatever might be their interest in keeping down the rates”, were empowered to superintend the general administration of the relief in the parish, and hear and finally decide on the appeals from the decisions of permanent officers such as you describe, do you think it would be an improvement in the administration of relief?—Certainly it would, as they would have better knowledge, and I am sure would act justly and correctly towards the poor, without thinking of the rates. Such persons never do take the rates into consideration in particular cases. If such a controlling body were established, I think the interference of the magistrates might be very beneficially removed, for the deserving poor would get better treated, whilst the drunken, dissolute characters, to whom we are now compelled to give relief, would not be fastened upon the parish in such numbers. The magistrates now order relief without any reference to character.

MILE END NEW TOWN (MIDDLESEX.)

Population		-		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
				5,253	6,028	7,091	7,384
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor - }	-	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
		£. 1,075	£. 1,794	£. 908	£. 1,234	£. 1,815	£. 1,957

W. Leach, Esq. Town Clerk of the Hamlet of Ratcliff, in the Parish of Stepney.

THE average number of paupers received into the house, and the amount of out-door relief, has increased to an alarming extent in the course of the last 20 years. This may in some measure be attributed to the number of small houses which have been built in and near the metropolis, and the consequent influx of the working classes of society; but I apprehend that the primary cause of this excess in the expenditure, arises from the extraordinary notion which the magistrates of this district entertain respecting parish relief. In fact, it has not only been publicly proclaimed from the bench at the Thames police office, that every pauper, whether of a good or bad character, whether able-bodied or otherwise, who chooses to apply there for relief, may obtain an order upon the overseer for it, but that resolve is strictly and promptly carried into effect. I never knew an instance where the overseers had previously refused relief, but the pauper obtained it by applying to the magistrates.

Do you give relief in your parish to the able-bodied?—The parish officer in our district is compelled to give relief. No matter what may be the merits of the party, no matter what may be his character, relief he must have, if he swears that he is in want of relief, for the magistrate will order it to him.

Are there many cases of able-bodied applicants in which the parish officers, acting upon their knowledge of the case of an individual, or of his character, would refuse relief if they were not compelled to give by the magistrate?—I do not believe that the parish would relieve one in twenty, either of single able-bodied men or women, if they were not compelled so to do by the interference of magistrates. Many of the single females chargeable to the parish are low prostitutes of one description or other.

The practice is to send an officer back with the applicant, with direction to see the pauper relieved; but if the overseer still persists in his refusal, the officer is then to return to the office with the party, in order that further measures may be taken. When it comes to this, a printed order, signed by one of the magistrates, is made upon the overseer for a given sum to be paid daily to the pauper, or to take the party into the house. The overseer, finding himself in this awkward situation, reluctantly submits to the formal mandate.

Character of the paupers.

Would not relieve one in twenty, except on compulsion from the magistrates.

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In one instance an overseer refused relief to a single woman whom he did not consider to stand in need of any relief whatever. The magistrate sent down a written order for an allowance of 1s. a day. The overseer ordered her to be taken into the house; she refused to go into the house, and we saw nothing more of her. It frequently occurs that when paupers have been refused relief, the magistrate has sent down an officer with an order to see the pauper relieved, and not to leave the parties until relief is given; and if relief is not given, to bring back the applicants, that "measures may be taken to enforce their order."

Is no summons previously sent, or no opportunity previously given, in these instances, to the parish officers, to show cause why they have refused to relieve the applicant?—The magistrates think it a matter of favour not to summons the parish officers.

It may be proper that I should observe here, that a very different system is pursued in the neighbouring district, and the result is, their rates are rapidly decreasing, and ours are rapidly increasing. Many instances have come to my knowledge of paupers removing into this hamlet, because they could not succeed in getting relief in the adjoining parishes. I have no hesitation in saying, that if it were not for the interference of the magistrates, that the casual relief of this hamlet would be reduced to one half the present amount.

Do you not think that if the decision of the parish officers were made final in matters of relief, great injustice would be done to applicants?—I am not prepared to say that the pauper ought to be left without appeal. In fact, I think he ought to have an appeal; but certainly not to the present authority. I think there ought to be some Government functionary especially appointed for the purpose, and that some measures should be taken, by means of Government officers, of enforcing uniformity in the administration of the law. At present we have one law in one district, and a totally different law in the district immediately adjoining: we have often a different law in the same office, according to the opinion of the magistrates who happen to be present.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.

Do you believe that the parochial expenditure might be considerably reduced by an improved administration under some such central control as you appear to contemplate?—I have no doubt that our amount of expenditure would be reduced full one-half.

Has this opinion been long entertained by you?—I have always considered that the present system must be entirely altered.

But I should recommend that no relief whatever be given to able-bodied single men or women, but let the Board have authority to advance small sums of money by way of loan, upon receiving some acknowledgment or security for the repayment of the same. With regard to applicants for relief who may have families, or where there is sickness, the Board should have discretionary power either to relieve them under the same conditions or otherwise, according to the circumstances of the case; and when the parties get into work, the overseer should have the same power of recovering the sum advanced from their employers, either by instalments or otherwise, as they now have of claiming seamen's wages in the merchant-service, or the pension for past services in the navy or army, for money advanced either to the parties themselves or to their families. There is a provision already made, to authorize overseers to advance small sums of money in this way; but there is no power to enable the overseers to enforce a repayment of the money so advanced from the employers. I beg also to suggest, that savings banks should be established in every parish, and that some compulsory measure be adopted to oblige the employers of every working man to deposit in such savings banks a small portion of their men's weekly earnings, in their names, and for the sole benefit of the respective parties; which said several sums should remain where deposited until some proper authority should sanction the taking of it out: this, perhaps, may be considered rather as an infringement upon the liberty of the subject, but if such persons will not take care of themselves, Government must take care of them; witness the good effect of the trifling deduction made from seamen's wages, which is applied towards the support of Greenwich Hospital, and the Merchant Seamen's Widows' Fund, which are as follows: Seamen in His Majesty's service, 6d. per month to Greenwich Hospital; seamen in the merchant service, 6d. per month to Greenwich, and 6d. per month to the Merchant Seamen's Widows' Fund. Although the seamen in the merchant service contribute the same to Greenwich Hospital as the seamen in the royal navy, the former have no claim whatever for admittance into that establishment. This may be considered to touch rather upon the liberty of the subject, still it is a most excellent regulation, and is scarcely felt or even known by those who subscribe it.

Government authority ought to be interposed.

No money ought to be given to able-bodied applicants; it should be advanced on loan.

59 Geo. 3, c. 12,
s. 29.

Compulsory deductions from wages to meet parochial liabilities recommended.

Independent of the before-mentioned suggestion relative to the savings banks, I have no doubt but it would be attended with considerable advantage to the small industrious trader, and others, particularly if they had the privilege of investing their surplus cash for short periods. Although such an arrangement would be attended with some expense to the Government, still it would do an infinite deal of good.

With regard to the character and description of the different prostitutes who reside in and about this hamlet, I should say, that for the most part they are of the lower order; at the same time there are some few who make rather a better appearance, but who are nevertheless common street-walkers; it may be proper to observe, that most of the illegitimate children which become chargeable to this hamlet belong either to servants or to young women who pretend to be getting their living by needle-work; but let them come

Relief given to prostitutes.

Bastardy.

from whatever quarter they may, the general feeling is, that the parish and no one else is bound to support them. I think that if illegitimate children were to follow the settlement of the father, instead of being fixed on the parishes where born, it would have some good effect; at all events it would not be quite so easy to get rid of the stigma as at present; under the existing law, if the reputed father be particularly anxious to avoid the disgrace, he has only to send the mother to some distant parish to lye-in, which frequently leads to a compromise with the parish-officers there, and the father is exonerated from all further liability; he is never more heard of, and the child is left as a sort of outcast for the remainder of its life. The law of maintenance ought to be more strictly enforced; and the practice of compromising with the reputed fathers ought to be entirely done away with, by subjecting the parties to a penalty of 100*l.* each.

If the above suggestion should be adopted, it would be gratefully felt by the poorer classes of Irish, many of whom get married in this country by their own priests, according to the Catholic church, which being illegal, all their children born in this country (under such a marriage) are considered as bastards; this has caused many an unfortunate family to be entirely separated, by their parents being sent to Ireland, and the children to the parishes where born.

Settlements.

Adjudications of
settlement cases by
two barristers pro-
posed.

Although the law of settlement has been very much improved by several recent Acts of Parliament, still much remains to be done, particularly as to the expense of passing paupers to their respective places of settlement, and the enormous expenses which follow in the event of an appeal to the sessions: if both parishes are situate in the county where the appeal is heard, it will cost each parish from 15*l.* to 50*l.*, but if the question is to be tried in a distant county, it will then cost each parish from 50*l.* to 200*l.*, and at the same time the most trifling circumstance will turn the scale either way. In order, therefore, to do away with this head of expenditure, I beg to propose, that the settlement of paupers should be determined upon in a summary way, viz. each parish should refer the case to two barristers, either in the metropolis or in the nearest assize town to the parish from which the pauper may be passed; each parish should appoint one of the barristers; and if any difficulty arose between them in the adjustment of the question, they should be at liberty to call in a third, whose decision should be final, and from which there should be no appeal. If the question should be one of assessment, the party aggrieved should in the first place apply to the Board for redress, and if he could not obtain it there, he should be at liberty to refer the question to three inhabitant rate-payers, and the local Board should appoint three others, to whom the case should be referred; and if any difficulty arose as to the adjustment of the question, they should be at liberty to call in one other competent person, whose decision should be final, and from which there should be no appeal.

If the above suggestion should be approved of, each party should pay the expenses jointly; this would save many hundreds of pounds on both sides, and I have no doubt would give much more satisfaction than the present expensive mode of valuation.

Alteration in the
mode of removing
paupers suggested.

The present formal and inconvenient mode of passing paupers to their legal places of settlement should be discontinued, and the delivery of the order of removal *by the pauper*, or by any other person on behalf of the parish from which the pauper is to be passed, should be sufficient, the order to be signed by the parochial authorities instead of the magistrates, which is a complete farce.

Compounding for
tenements.

With respect to the present custom of compounding with the landlords of small houses for the payment of their parochial rates, whether the respective premises be occupied or unoccupied, I should certainly say, that it is to the interest of the parishes so to do; in fact, if such an arrangement was not entered into, no rates whatever would be received for such premises. The out-door paupers of this hamlet amount to about most of whom reside in farmed houses, and where would be the use of rating such persons to the relief of the poor; by so doing, the landlords would have the benefit and no one else.

Workhouse.

The next question is, that of the workhouse. At present, the average number of inmates amount to about 250, and the weekly expense of clothing and maintaining them is about 550*l.*; this is as near as possible to the sum paid for out-door relief. This workhouse was built at an expense of about 6,000*l.*, which sum was borrowed by bonds, bearing interest at 5 per cent. In planning the wards and other internal fitting, particular regard was had to the classification of the paupers, but so many difficulties occurred in attempting to carry this measure into effect, that it has almost wholly failed; in fact, we have got no farther than separating the males from the females, and the children from the adults: and I begin to think that it is impracticable to put this scheme into practice in so small an establishment; but if Government should be of opinion that the moral and intellectual improvement of the rising generation require their solicitude and protection, and that the classification of the paupers would tend to this end, then Government must undertake that task themselves, and instead of building an additional number of prisons within the metropolis, let a certain number of houses of industry be erected at convenient distances from London and other large towns, some in particular for the reception of infants under a given age, where they should be educated and instructed in such a way as may be considered necessary and proper to fit them for the station in life in which they are likely to be called; other establishments should be provided for the reception of female adults of idle and dissipated

Failure of attempts
to make the requi-
site classification in.Separate houses
should be provided
for each separate
class.

pated habits, who might be employed to wash, mend and make for themselves and the other establishments also. Others should be provided for idle and sturdy vagrants, who should have a sufficient quantity of good productive land to employ them in spade husbandry, which would not only produce a sufficiency for their own maintenance, but would contribute considerably towards the maintenance of the other houses; every parish sending their paupers to either of these houses of industry should pay a moderate sum per week for each, which should not exceed the cost of maintenance in their own workhouses; which workhouses should be kept for the exclusive use of the aged and infirm poor.

Each parish should pay per head for the maintenance of paupers sent to the separate workhouses.

Whether any of these suggestions be adopted or otherwise, I nevertheless think that one general law for the guidance of every parish in the kingdom should be passed, under the authority of which all large parishes should be divided into districts not to exceed a rental of 30,000 *l.*, and for the entire management of which a certain number of trustees or vestrymen, say from 30 to 40, should be nominated, out of which number 15 to 30 should be chosen annually; each district to have a treasurer, clerk, permanent overseer, collector, beadles, &c., all of which appointments, making all rates, whether for the relief of the poor or for any other purpose, entering into all contracts, paying bills and all other claims upon the district, should be vested in the authorities to be so appointed; the Board should meet every Tuesday evening without notice, and be authorized to divide themselves into committees, to consist of five members (three to be a quorum), one to be the house committee, another to be the lighting, cleansing and repairing committee, another to be audit and general account committee, and so on, as the case may be; to each of which committees all matters appertaining to their respective departments should be referred, and they should report their opinion and proceedings to the Board for their consideration and approval; there should be one uniform mode of assessment, keeping and publishing of the district accounts. Similar rules and regulations should be adopted in all workhouses; in fact, one general system of management should be observed throughout the kingdom.

One general system of management should be enforced throughout the kingdom.

In some parishes they have for various purposes several local Acts, viz. one for the relief of the poor, another for lighting and cleansing, another for paving and repairing, and, before the establishment of the new police, one for watching, each having their separate boards and complete sets of officers; now, I should say, that all these duties ought to be under the management and control of one board; in this hamlet it is so; indeed, the local Act for this hamlet might, with very little alteration, be applied to every parish.

The separate Boards and functions might be consolidated.

The greatest objection to the Government taking the management of the poor into their own hands is, that the lighting, cleansing, &c. would still remain to be done by the parochial authorities, consequently this would be attended with nearly the same trouble and expense as the doing of the whole; and the next objection would be as to the distribution of the casual relief; if that should be suffered to exist, it would most certainly increase; but if Government would take the entire management of every district into their own hands, I mean the lighting, &c. as well as the poor, consolidate the expenses, equalize the rates, erect houses of industry, discontinue out-door relief, then I have no doubt but the system would work well, one head of expenditure would at once be completely annihilated; I allude to the expenses of appeals connected with the law of settlement.

Disadvantages and advantages of the Government management.

ST. BOTOLPH WITHOUT ALDGATE.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.
Population	- -	6,153	5,265	6,429	3,453

		1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }	-	£. 1,406	£. 3,921	£. 5,492	£. 4,563	£. 3,911	£. 2,609

Mr. James Hall, Assistant Overseer of the Parish of *St. Botolph Without Aldgate*.
Has been in office 27 years.

I THINK that about half, or rather more than half our poor, are deserving objects. Soon after we pay our poor, we see them in groups at the doors of the next gin shops. The persons of many of them bear marks of drink. We see them about the gin shops at other times. Females have frequently come for relief in a state of intoxication. We have frequently refused to pay them on account of their habits, but they have generally resorted to the magistrates, who say that we must support them, notwithstanding their improvidence. This has been reported to us. If we had a house strictly managed we should get rid of one half.

Characters of the paupers.

A strictly managed workhouse would get rid of one half of the paupers.

If you had a house strictly managed, though without work, do you think that result would follow?—I am sure it would.

If you had piece-work, or other work which you could be sure of being applied, do you think it would produce the same result as a workhouse?—I am quite sure of it.

Farm-houses do not answer, as the keepers give paupers their liberty for the sake of saving their food.

Farm-houses do not do, for the farm-house keepers give them their liberty. I have been told by different paupers that they have received 2d. a day from the farm-house keeper, who has set them at liberty and saved his provisions. The farm-house keepers deny this, but I believe that the practice exists. Even now the paupers are frequently seen out at large.

We have many persons of respectable connexions who are receiving parish relief, and who are assisted with little sums by their friends.

Now, if the parish had a workhouse, and these people were told that they must go into the workhouse, do you think that they would go?—I am sure that a great many would not.

Persons receiving relief as paupers who live in creditable neighbourhoods.

Then you consider that their friends would in these cases increase their contributions, and provide for them?—Many of these persons live at a distance, in very creditable neighbourhoods, and I have had reason to believe that the circumstance of their being paupers is not known. They can come and receive relief at our parish without it being known that they have relief. Many of them we pay in monthly and fortnightly pensions. We formerly published lists of paupers, and I think that it was very serviceable in getting us information, and also in giving information to other parishes. I think it had some effect in checking applications for relief, as the paupers did not like having their names upon it. But this list could not have any effect on the paupers living at a distance and not known to be paupers, as it could only make the fact known by chance, and that a very remote chance; for the list was only used by the parishes.

I believe that our parish, small as it is, would save greatly by having an inspector paid to make visits monthly, or within a fortnight, or within a less time. The reductions which such an officer might occasion would amply pay his salary. I have recommended this visitation to be made by our parish officers, but they are tradesmen, and cannot give the time.

PARISH OF ST. MARY, LAMBETH.

		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.	
Population - -		27,939	41,644	57,638	87,856	
Expenditure for the } Relief of the Poor }	1803.	1815.	1821.	1826.	1831.	1832.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
	9,980	21,572	39,613	23,913	37,062	34,337

Mr. Watmore, Vestry-Clerk of *Lambeth*.

Mode of conducting the parochial business in Lambeth parish.

DURING 18 years and a half I have been in office as vestry-clerk. The parish is divided into four divisions or liberties. Each of these liberties returns two overseers and one churchwarden. It is very rare that the same persons serve more than one year. On the Thursday the overseers dine with each other. In our parish it takes three days to pay the poor. The impotent poor and regular poor are paid on the Wednesday. The bastardy cases are paid on the Tuesday. On the Thursday the casual poor are paid, and new cases examined. Each overseer relieves the casual poor in cases within his district, which are cases of necessity; and this relief is by a little printed ticket on the clerk of the workhouse. The overseer relieving signs his name and the amount on the ticket, and this serves as a voucher for every one, the smallest item.

Relief ordered by cheques on the clerks of the workhouse.

We have two assistant overseers, each of whom has two districts. It is their duty to examine and report upon each case to the overseer of the district; by that overseer relief is ordered in cases of urgent necessity. An assistant overseer gives relief on his own responsibility occasionally, but that is accounted for by ticket. No permanent relief is given except by the Board on the Thursday. Each assistant overseer has a salary of 150l.

Effects of payment being made by cheques on the clerks of the workhouse.

Before the establishment of the checks I have known casual poor obtain relief from the whole eight overseers during the period for which relief was given by each overseer. Frauds have been committed with the tickets. One woman was prosecuted to conviction at the Guildford Assizes for increasing the amount of the ticket; but frauds in this way cannot be

be very extensive. I see every day the benefits of this check, as regards officers as well as the applicants, and I can see no reason why it should not be adopted in other parishes. In our parish the overseers neither receive nor pay any money. The collectors are bound to pay in every week to the banker's the money collected. We have eight collectors, with securities of 1,000*l.* each.

Mr. Luke Teather, Assistant Overseer for the Marsh and Wall and Bishop's Liberties of the Parish of Lambeth.

ON the 6th of March next I shall have been in office six years. Before I obtained this situation I had been a sergeant of the 3d regiment of the Guards, and had been a clerk in the Orderly-room. In my part of the parish there is rather the largest number of poor; my colleague has the largest extent of ground.

Some casual relief is given without investigation; but the general rule is, that no relief shall be given without inquiry into the circumstances of the case. The parties who stand in need of relief may apply at the workhouse, or to one of the overseers, or to me personally; but in all cases it is required that I should visit the residences of the parties, and make inquiry into their cases. If, however, the party applying should be a pregnant woman, temporary relief is of course given her at once, until inquiry into the case can be made. The record of the cases is entered under the following heads in a book provided for the purpose and kept by me. Before I entered into office no record of the cases was kept; the following form of entries was devised by me, and sanctioned by the parochial authorities:

Mode of administering relief to the out-door poor.

A case having been referred to me for inquiry, the course I take is this: I first go to their houses, and in nine cases out of ten it is only necessary to see the place to be convinced that they are in distress; the misery or the want of relief is displayed not only in the condition of the place, but in the persons of the applicants or of their children. I think that from experience I can at once determine whether the parties are or are not in want. In general the first thing I do is to open the cupboard; it is mostly empty. If any doubt should arise, I make inquiries into the man's character from the place where he has been employed, or from the chandlers' shops; the greater part of the money of the poor is spent at the chandler's shop, and there we learn what has been their habits, what sort of food they have been accustomed to buy, and how they have been accustomed to pay for it. If there has been profligacy on the part of the applicants, I generally find the shopkeeper in a state of irritation; in general their mode of giving information is satisfactory; they do not conceal the faults of the poor. The workmen in general give as good an account as they can of their fellow-workmen. The chandlers' shops now usually keep books, and sometimes I refer to them. If the applicants have been in distress I expect to find that they have lived very low, chiefly on bread with herrings. The children of the poor have lived for weeks together on nothing but bread and butter. If the labourers are better off they will have various other articles, cheese, bacon, tea, sugar, eggs, &c. The length of their endurance of low fare before they apply for parochial relief is diminishing. I have known instances where parties have endured very great lengths of suffering before they would apply for relief; and frequently they would, I do believe, have starved rather than apply to the parish, had they not been persuaded to do so by persons who knew them; but these cases are very rare indeed, and they are chiefly of persons who have seen better days. I have been sometimes to make inquiries of the publican, but in general the publican will know nothing about them; I have known publicans who would give the best information they possessed. It is of no use to go to the gin shop. There are very few poor who, when poor, deal with the baker; in general they will deal with the keeper of the little chandler's shop. The poor, when in need of parochial relief, have very little meat. I think that a man ought to have full a pound of bread a day for his subsistence, if he eats nothing else; but I have often found families where the whole of them have not had more than half a pound of bread each a day. Besides the sources of information which I have named, I sometimes have recourse to the masters who have employed the men, and take advantage of the information of any respectable neighbour who may have been acquainted with the circumstances of the applicant.

Mode of investigating cases of out-door applicants for relief.

In some cases I think it would facilitate our inquiries, if we had a known means of punishing parties refusing to give information.

If the list is a very long one, I call in to my assistance one of the two beadles of the two liberties which I superintend. Their reports are entered into my case-book, as if the inquiries had been made by myself.

The heaviest day for new applications that I remember was one in which there were nearly 40 cases; myself and the beadles got through the whole of the cases from six until about ten or half-past ten o'clock. I make it a rule, if possible, to inquire into the cases of all the applicants on the night of the day on which the application is made; I have, myself, got through as many as 15 new cases on the same night. I think that, unless the cases lay very wide, I might thoroughly investigate as many as 30 cases during one whole day.

Average number of cases which may be investigated during any one day.

Besides the new cases, it is also my duty to attend and investigate the old cases. The names of those paupers who appear likely to remain permanently chargeable to the parish

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.

are entered in a book, called the Ticket-book. I keep an index of those ticket cases which are within my district, and also of the cases of non-residents who live on the Middlesex side of the river. The non-residents who belong to Surrey come within the province of my colleague.

The witness having been requested to produce a return setting forth the former occupations of the paupers of this parish, here gave it in; it is as follows:

RETURN of the Occupations of the Applicants for Relief in the Marsh and Wall and Bishop's Liberties, and Non-Residents in Middlesex, taken for the last Three Years, ending 12th November 1832.

Bakers - - - - 12	Curriers - - - - 3	Postman - - - - 1
Barbers - - - - 9	Cutlers - - - - 6	Potters - - - - 2
Bargebuilders - - - 7	Deal-porters - - - 8	Pipemaker - - - - 1
Braizers - - - - 4	Dustmen - - - - 8	Printers - - - - 12
Bricklayers and Plasterers 49	Engineers, Smiths and Foundrymen - - - 102	Sailors - - - - 7
Brushmakers - - - - 4	Fishermen - - - - 33	Sawyers - - - - 45
Butchers - - - - 9	Gardeners - - - - 13	Shoemakers - - - - 57
Carpenters - - - - 59	Glass-cutters and Blowers 10	Showmen - - - - 3
Carvers and Gilders - - 8	Hatters - - - - 15	Silversmiths and Jewellers 9
Chairmakers - - - - 15	Hawkers - - - - 6	Slaters - - - - 4
Chimneysweeps - - - - 4	Journeyman Pawnbrokers 3	Tailors - - - - 20
Clerks and Schoolmasters 20	Labourers - - - - 502	Tallowchandlers - - - 6
Coachmen - - - - 12	Masons - - - - 12	Upholsterers - - - - 3
Coal Porters - - - - 31	Mast and Oar-makers - - 3	Watchmen - - - - 5
Combmakers - - - - 3	Musical Instrument makers 4	Water and Lightermen - 19
Coopers - - - - 5	Painters and Glaziers - 42	Wheelwrights and Coach Jobbers - - - - 10
Corkcutters - - - - 4	Paperhangers - - - - 2	
Costermongers - - - - 24		

Memorandum.—The female applicants are of only three classes, viz. Sempsters, Charwomen or Washerwomen.

Luke Teather, Assistant-Overseer.

RETURN of the former Occupations of the Inmates of the Workhouse, 12th November 1832.

Men :	Labourers - - - - 119	Boys not any trade - - 54
Apothecary - - - - 1	Masons - - - - 3	
Bakers - - - - 3	Painter - - - - 1	Women :
Bargebuilders - - - - 2	Potter - - - - 1	Mantua-makers, sempsters, &c. - - - - 15
Brassfounders - - - - 2	Rope-spinner - - - - 1	Servants - - - - 405
Bricklayers - - - - 7	Sawyers - - - - 6	Girls not been to trade or service - - - - 22
Butcher - - - - 1	Servants - - - - 7	
Carpenters - - - - 12	Shoemakers - - - - 4	Total - - - - 715
Clerks - - - - 7	Smiths - - - - 6	
Coopers - - - - 2	Tailors - - - - 5	
Dyers - - - - 2	Tinmen - - - - 2	
Gardeners - - - - 7	Watermen - - - - 11	
Hatters - - - - 3	Wheelwrights - - - - 3	
	Wire-drawer - - - - 1	

Luke Teather, Assistant-Overseer.

What sort of wages have these classes mostly had, high or low?—We have very many classes of workmen who apply for parochial relief after having received very high wages, and it may be laid down as a rule, that those who receive unusually high wages, and especially those who receive high wages during particular periods, as during the prevalence of a fashion, or during the summer season, are the most improvident.

Do you find, making an allowance for the increase of the demands upon you from the increase of your population, that these habits of improvidence amongst mechanics are increasing or diminishing?—Their habits have not improved; but work has greatly diminished, and consequently they have not now all the means of being improvident which they formerly had.

Will you specify from the preceding list some of the classes who had wages sufficient to maintain them, and to enable them to put by a surplus to provide for the contingencies for which the parish is resorted to?—The carpenters get from 20s. to 30s. a week; if they have a family we cannot expect them to save much from that; but many of them who have been good workmen, who have applied for relief, such as joiners and cabinet-makers, have made more, and might have saved something. Some of them who have earned no more have saved money. One or two I know have made use of their savings to build some little cottages. In Henry-street there are from 16 to 20 small houses, built chiefly by journey-men, in this way: A builder makes up the carcass; the house being just tiled in. He then lets

lets them for an additional ground-rent to mechanics, chiefly carpenters, bricklayers and plasterers. He will give them a hundred of deals, and a proportionate quantity of lime, to begin with. The carpenter then agrees with the bricklayer and plasterer, that each shall do the work for the other, and with their reciprocal labour and their savings they finish the houses. We have had many bootmakers and shoemakers who might have saved enough money when in work to keep them from the parish when they are out of work. Amongst the barbers there are several who have been master barbers, who might have saved enough money to keep them from the parish; one man I know could not have got less than 3*l.* or 4*l.* a week; he boasted that he had made 30*s.* on a Sunday. Amongst the tailors are many who might save money. Some of them on the parish are very good workmen, who could earn about 6*s.* a day, and when they chose to work over-work, about 7*s.* One of them now on the parish, a man named M'Innis, is said by persons in the trade to be one of the best workmen in London. He is now just out of the tread-mill for neglecting his family. The greater part of sawyers could save enough to keep them from the parish during the intervals of work. The greater part of them, that is, all the able men, before the saw-mills came up, could have put by at least 1*l.* Before the saw-mills were established a pair of sawyers have during the whole year earned 5*l.* a week; they have acknowledged to me, in blaming their own improvidence, that there have been times when they have earned as much as 10*l.* a week; they have acknowledged also that when they have been earning money they have never taken their families more than 1*l.* a week regularly; they have paid rent and bought coals besides; they have themselves lived at the public-house with the rest of their money. Barge-builders are men who could save money; they have 6*s.* a day standing wages. The hatters are provided for when out of work by a trade society, which I believe is a very good thing; those who come to us for relief are "foul men," those who have been excluded or who have never been admitted to the society. The coal-porters earn a great deal; they have been known to get as much as 9*s.* or 10*s.* a day, but they are very rarely known to save anything. The printers have some sort of society, but they have been in very great distress.

Specification of the classes who are improvident.

Do you think it would be of service, with relation to persons who when in work obtain high wages, to give to parish-officers the power of attaching a portion of their wages in the hands of masters as repayment for money advanced by the parish?—I think it would be useful. They would not apply for relief, and would save money, if they were aware that when they got work a portion of their wages could be retained. There are great numbers of them who would not be unwilling to pay, but who have not the power of putting by money; this is especially the case with allowances for bastard children, and men who are ordered to pay a sum of money for the maintenance of their wives.

Use of granting to parish-officers the power of attaching a portion of wages, to repay past expenses.

If you could get hard work for your able-bodied out-door poor, so as to make their condition on the whole less eligible than that of the independent labourer, what proportion of those who are now chargeable to the parish do you think would remain so?—On a rough guess, I do not think that more than one out of five would remain.

Effect which would be produced by rendering the condition of the pauper on the whole less eligible than that of an independent labourer.

Have you any facts which you can adduce to justify that conclusion?—From the instances of the proportions who have left on the occasions of their having had work given them. Some time ago, for instance, we had a lot of granite broken: there were not above 20 per cent. of the men who began who remained to work at all; there were not above two per cent. who remained the whole of the time during which the work lasted. Many of them, however, were not idle men, but they found other jobs: they were doubtless more stimulated to seek work by the stone-breaking. I think it would save much money if the parish officers were to advertise to break stones for the roads for nothing for all persons who chose to bring the granite and take it away again. The great defect of our parish is that we have no means of setting them to work.

It is the study of bad paupers to deceive you all they can; and as they study more their own cases than any inquirer can study each of the whole mass of different cases which he has to inquire into, they are sure to be successful in a great many instances. The only protection for the parish is to make the parish the hardest taskmaster and the worst paymaster that can be applied to. But we have no means now of setting any tasks of labour to them. We have now from 20 to 30 bad characters (as is reported by the police), who receive relief, and whom we cannot get rid of, as the magistrates will order them relief if we refuse it.

Impositions inevitable in a great number of instances.

The average out-door allowance is 1*s.* 3½*d.* per head weekly, men, women and children. The in-door are farmed at 3*s.* 11*d.* At Norwood the expense is about 3*s.* 3*d.*

If a birth settlement were established, and it were generally known that parties when they claimed relief would be removed to the place of their birth, it would make them much more provident. They would save money, and take care to avoid being sent to their birth-place.

Birth settlement; use of.

I am positive that the power of deciding on cases of relief might be fully entrusted to a board of overseers in such a parish as ours, and that the magistrates might, with great advantage to the public and the working classes, be relieved from their jurisdiction.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.

*Witness's mode of
investigating appli-
cations for out-door
relief.*

Mr. William Weale, Assistant-Overseer of the Parish of Lambeth.

I WAS living on a small annuity when I was appointed to the situation of assistant-overseer.

I always, in inquiring into the character of an applicant for relief, pursue the rule, of first making inquiry as to his previous habits of life from any butcher or baker or grocer in the neighbourhood. In general, I make inquiry of rate-payers, as I find them the most disposed to give information. The more respectable poor deal with the baker; the lowest order deal with the Chandler's shop. Where I find that a man is not to be heard of at a baker's or butcher's, and I find that he only deals with the Chandler's shop, I take that as a sign that he is a man who is trusted nowhere else. Without difficulty I gain all the information of which these tradesmen are possessed. I have found that the deserving poor often struggle to the last rather than apply for relief. I find, on inquiry as to their previous purchases in the neighbourhood, that they have been living on very low diet, on potatoes, for instance. I inquire into the previous habits of the applicants, in order that we may judge of the mode in which the money given them for their relief will be expended. If their former course of life has been profligate, if they have been reduced to poverty by their own indolence, we are well aware that whatever money is given to them will go in the greater part to the beer-shop or the gin-shop. The deserving poor lay out their money to the best advantage. The effect of pauperism, even on people who are not to be classed as vicious, is to break down their spirits; they are careless of their persons, and dirty in their habits: they take no care of their children: those whose habits have always been industrious do take more care of their children.

*Number of cases
which witness could
investigate daily.*

If new cases lay near at hand, I could investigate satisfactorily, perhaps 50 in a day; but as my district is very wide, extending as much as seven miles from the workhouse, I could not get through more than 20 cases each day, even in the long days. Besides this inquiry into the cases of applicants for relief, I inquire into the cases of the non-payment of poor's rate, and whether the neglect or refusal proceeds from inability to pay, or from any other causes, and I report the same to the overseers. It is also my duty to inform the vestry-clerk of all houses newly erected in the parish, and of all houses, noted in the rate-book empty, which have become inhabited; I report them in order that they may be assessed to the rate; I enter this in a book kept for the purpose, and called the Draught-book. This serves as a check on the collectors and on overseers, who from favouritism or other causes might be disposed to overlook the houses of friends. The overseers or parish officers may be persons in business who are desirous of favouring friends. By imposing these duties on the assistant overseers, who have to traverse districts for purposes relating to the poor, these duties are performed at a very little additional expense, as it is all done under one head. I find frequently that when I am inquiring of a person about a house, he can also give me information with relation to a pauper.

*Beadles do not in-
quire into more than
two-thirds of their
cases.*

I do not willingly delegate to beadles the duties of inquiring and reporting. In truth, I find that they do not inquire into more than two-thirds of the cases. They generally report that they have visited some persons in the neighbourhood of the pauper. It is extremely difficult to ascertain whether the inquiry has been completely made.

We sustain great inconvenience by having to attend upon magistrates to obtain orders of removal; we greatly want relief as to the mode in which the business of parishes is transacted at the police offices.

*Perquisites or pecu-
lations of beadles.*

The bastardy cases are not within the province of the assistant overseers; the beadles make the requisite inquiries; they have done this ever since I have been in office. Some of them, when they go down into the country, charge highly for their journies; they charge for the first-rate conveyance, when we believe that they go by the cheapest; I know that 12s. has been charged as the coach fare down to Brighton, when there were opposition coaches, the fares of which were 8s. I have mentioned these things to them; when they have complained that I, who had no family, hindered them, who had families, from making a few shillings. We have reason to know that they report fathers of bastard children to be incapable of paying when they can pay; they represent a man to be unable to pay more than 2s. 6d. a week, when he ought to be made to pay 5s. a week; they have always a manifest leaning in favour of the father and against the parish; we do not know that they take money, or of course a different practice would be adopted. The salaries of the four beadles are only 280l. per annum; but we are satisfied that they make double the amount of their salaries. One of them, using some insolent language to my colleagues, told him that his (the beadle's) place was worth double that of an assistant overseer's; that he would not take 300l. per annum for it. It would be a great saving to every parish if these duties were performed by respectable officers, who gave such sureties, and were paid such salaries, as not to make it worth while to risk them by any speculation. These beadles pay great court to the overseers, which respectable officers cannot go out of their way to do; but this is one cause of their impunity. It would be a great improvement if the districts were divided, even if our salaries were reduced, and the whole duties of inquiry were given to one officer. It is a waste of labour to give one set of cases for inquiry to one officer, when he might, by a very little additional labour, at the same time inquire into several other sorts of cases, and do them all under one head, as we do in inquiring after rated houses and people who have not paid their rates, at the same time that we inquire into the cases of paupers.

An ACCOUNT of the Incidental Expenses of the Beadles, as paid Quarterly, was ordered to be made out. The following is the Account sent in :

RETURN of Money Expended by the Beadles of the Parish of St. Mary, Lambeth, as charged in the Accounts of Incidental Expenses, for One Year, ending 13th November 1832.

LIBERTIES.	Expense of Inquests.	Scotch and Irish Passes.	Warrants to Apprehend, and Expenses.	Removals, Beadle's Travelling Expenses, Food, Bed, &c.	Removals, Paupers' Expenses, Maintenance and Lodgings.	Magistrates' Orders of Removal, and Miscellaneous Expenses.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Bishop's - -	16 13 8	-- 16 6	1 6 -	13 5 6	21 12 8	10 5 2
Prince's - -	16 3 4	- - -	3 9 6	32 7 8	36 19 8	14 6 6
Marsh and Wall -	26 8 10	13 5 -	12 9 9	69 9 8	79 12 10	38 14 3
Out-Liberty - -	19 2 10	1 7 6	22 1 6	58 10 6	70 16 11	14 7 -
£.	78 8 8	15 9 -	39 6 9	173 13 4	209 2 1	77 12 11

TOTAL - - - - £. 593. 12. 9.

But, however diligent an assistant overseer, or an officer for inquiry, may be, there are numerous cases which will baffle his utmost diligence and sagacity ; the only test of these cases is making their condition more severe than that of the lowest class of labourers who obtain their livelihood by honest industry. I believe that there is a very large proportion of able-bodied people who receive relief out of the house, whose conditions are better than the condition of families of honest labourers who work for their livelihood. I have frequently reproached them with the dirty appearance of their children and their places of abode, and have pointed out to them the clean and tidy appearance of the houses and children of their neighbours, poor persons, who were living upon less money obtained by hard work, which occupied the greater part of their time ; invariably, I would say, that the most importunate and (to inexperienced persons) the most plausible paupers are the least deserving.

Characters of the out-door recipients of relief.

I think that all relief ought to be given in kind. We have found great benefits result from giving food or clothes instead of money. When parties have said they were in want of fuel, we have frequently gone to the trouble of purchasing coal rather than trust them with money.

Mr. James Andrews, Clerk of the Workhouse to the Overseers of Lambeth Parish.

I HAVE been in the service of the parish since the year 1797.

My duties are to keep the cash-books and ledgers, and collect the bastardy accounts on the orders of affiliation, and keep the children's register. The duty of collecting the bastardy accounts was imposed upon me in consequence of some tumults in the parish, in the midst of which it was asserted that I had little to do for my money. My salary is 150*l.* a year. I prepare the orders of examination, for which I am paid extra by the vestry-clerk ; I was employed on this because no one else could be found to do it.

For many years past we have not been accustomed, in our returns to the parish clerks, to make any distinction between the legitimate and the illegitimate. We return every admission and every discharge of children. We never received any communication from them, (except for some trifling thing, about 10 or 12 years ago, I forget what it was), requesting any alteration in the mode of making our returns ; I believe they are perfectly satisfied with the mode in which the returns are made ; I never heard from them, and have no reason to believe that they are otherwise than perfectly satisfied.

Parish clerks make no complaints with relation to the returns made to them.

In all cases whatever I examine the claims of settlement. In cases of strangers, when they make their first application for relief to the assistant overseers, they are all sent to me, to examine them as to their settlements. If I find that their settlement is in Lambeth, I give them a ticket stating that they belong to Lambeth. This ticket is taken to the assistant overseer, and he proceeds upon it. In some instances, I believe, the assistant overseers make their inquiry, as to the merits of the case, before the settlement is determined ; in some instances, I believe, they wait until the settlement is verified by me before they make their inquiry.

Cases of settlement examined by witness.

Some years ago I found that great frauds were committed in the parish by persons receiving relief who had no claim. One girl was receiving a stipend for her mother who had been dead a long time. I detected one woman who was receiving a pension from the parish, whom I found living as a householder of a house in Mary-le-bone, so very respectable

Instance of frauds on the parish, formerly committed.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.*Formerly, difficult
to get money out of
overseers' hands.**Remedy; never to
let money go into
overseers' hands.**Beadles always
favour the fathers
of bastard children;
supposed to receive
civility-money.**Lewd women al-
ways father their
children on the men
who can best main-
tain them.**Condition of inde-
pendent labourers,
as compared with
that of paupers.**Expressions of inde-
pendent labourers
when they first be-
came paupers.*

table in its appearance, that I was almost afraid to ring the bell: a servant came to answer me; this was the servant of our pauper. There was then no regular inspection of the state of those who received relief; it was a sort of thing too much for beadles to do to make proper inspection. Beadles generally are paid by perquisites; and where this is the case they are sure to give their whole attention to things by which perquisites are got. Neither are the persons usually appointed as beadles very fit persons for the performance of such duties: therefore men of better stations were appointed as assistant overseers. Our present assistant overseers are both independent men. The experiment of the appointment of one assistant overseer answered so well, that when he died, the duties having increased, two were appointed.

Formerly the money could not be got out of the overseers' hands; we never knew what was the state of the funds when there were four overseers; there was no check as to casual relief. One overseer became bankrupt, and in debt to the parish; we, in consequence, had all the money paid into the banker's. All disbursements are paid out by checks on the bankers, if the sums are above 5*l.*; if they are under that sum they are paid by other vouchers. The overseers have no money in their possession. We have four rates in the year, at 1*s.* 1*d.* each rate, which includes the police and the county-rate.

The mothers of bastard children often complain that the beadles use their influence to prevent the fathers paying so much as they ought. Sheriffs' officers receive civility-money, and it is to be expected beadles do the same; I can only form an idea of it; it is the case through life. The beadles' places, what with their travelling expenses and their perquisites, are very good; they have better places than mine; I am sure they have.

Unless the father of the bastard is a very substantial man, or a tradesman, I think it is the best, in all cases, to compound with the fathers. Sometimes prostitutes are pregnant, and cannot swear to any father. I always think well of girls who are so conscientious, and encourage them.

Many women are brought from the country to lie-in in the Metropolis, in order to conceal the shame; we have many cases of this sort in the parish.

In swearing children, where a lewd woman has had connexion with several fathers, they always pick out the father the best able to maintain the child. The rule of the magistrates of ordering to the girl the amount received on the order of affiliation is, in my opinion, a strong inducement to perjury. I think a prostitute ought not to be allowed to affiliate children.

Mr. Bartholomew Peter Drouet, resident Contractor and Master of Lambeth Workhouse.

I AM the resident contractor as well as the managing master of Lambeth workhouse. I have been so for two years. For five years before, I was in the same capacity at Gosport. For 18 years before that, I had been accustomed to the management of large bodies of poor working men.

I know the condition of the poorer of the independent working men. I can speak more particularly of the condition of those at Gosport, as I have seen it in going round collecting with the overseers there; and I can state, from what I have seen, that the poorer of the rate-payers fared worse than the paupers in the workhouse of that place. I have seen a very poor rate-payer dining on potatoes, and that for days together; and I have gone back to the workhouse and helped to serve the paupers there with meat and with dinners comparatively sumptuous.

Have you seen the poor rate-payers doing without such things as beer and butter?—The very poor rate-payers hardly ever think of such things unless it be on the Sunday. I have known the rate-payer, if he is a poor agricultural man, go out in a morning with a bottle of water and a piece of bread (perhaps a pound) made of flour with the bran in it; and when he returned home, he would expect a supper with a little skimmed milk thrown over it. This skimmed milk he has got given him perhaps by the neighbouring farmer. This is common in the country about Gosport, and also in Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire.

Now what would be the comparative fare of the pauper in the workhouse at Gosport?—I can state with respect to Gosport, that although the fare is much more scanty than that of other parishes, there being no butter or beer allowed, yet it is much better than that of the labourer out of the house. The man in the house gets more meat, more food of every sort. He is sure of a hot breakfast being prepared for him without the trouble of cooking it; he is also sure of a hot dinner. He is better clothed and better lodged, and sleeps better, and works less time, and does less altogether. When a poor family has once been driven into the workhouse, the proof they give of its being better is, that they never can be got out of it. There are very few instances of their getting away. I have heard them express their regret, when they first came in, that they had not come in sooner. I have heard this too from people whom I had before heard pitying the poor people in the workhouse, and hoping they should never come to such a state of things themselves. Amongst several who have been striving to keep out of the workhouse, when one part of them have been driven in, their representations of its superior comfort have induced the rest to come in.

This was the case at Gosport. Is your dietary at Lambeth much higher than at Gosport?—Considerably higher. In Lambeth they have beer and butter and sugar. They have also

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also more meat, and the women have as much as the men. They have five feasts in the year; a pea feast, a bean feast, two mutton feasts, and a plum-pudding feast. In Newington, Mr. Math was bound to give salmon once when in season, and mackerel once.

In Lambeth, have you the means of knowing what is the condition of the pauper, as compared with that of the labouring man?—I have had occasion to visit the residence of the poor, when I have seen their ordinary mode of living in the parish, and I am convinced that the pauper generally lives much better than the labouring man. At present we have workmen of all sorts in the house—carpenters, tailors, smiths, shoemakers, who all say that the fare is much better than they expected to find it. They say it is better than they have lived of late. The deserving poor are generally well satisfied; it is only the born and bred paupers whom it is impossible to satisfy.

This fare of Lambeth then offers still more considerable inducements to a working man from the country?—Yes; more inducements to remain on the parish. I have acknowledged to that effect from working men from the country.

With respect to the discipline of the house, have you any alterations to suggest?—The great want at present is, as I conceive, the means of a proper classification. We have the worst of characters in the house, which, in fact, constantly serves as a hiding-place for thieves. We have, I dare say, 30 thieves, all of whom have been in prison for robberies and various offences, and who we have reason to believe do commit depredations whenever they are at large. It is a common occurrence to have inquiries made for particular characters at the workhouse, in consequence of offences supposed to have been committed by them. We also have perhaps about from 20 to 30 prostitutes in the house. These, the worst characters, can always speak with the best characters; and the form of the house allows us no means of preventing it. We cannot prevent the thief speaking to the young, or keep the prostitute from the young girl who has not been corrupted. There is, unhappily, a strong disposition on the part of such characters to bring others to the same condition. I have overheard a prostitute say to a young girl, "You are good-looking; what do you stay in here for? you might get plenty of money;" and point out to her the mode. Last October, as an experiment, we sent off eight girls to Van Diemen's Land: they were all brought up as workhouse children, and were incorrigible prostitutes. Now I have evidence that seven of these girls were all corrupted by the same girl, named Maria Stevens. Every one of these girls had been in prison for depredations. One of them had been three times tried for felonies in having robbed the persons with whom she was in service. Such was the influence which this girl had over them, that they would not consent to go until she consented, nor would they be separated from her; and she formed the eighth of the party. The old thieves teach the boys their ways. A few months ago I took one thief before a magistrate for having given lessons to the workhouse boys how to "star the glaze," as they call it; that is, how to take panes of glass out of shop windows without breaking them or making any noise. In so large a workhouse as ours, the youth are never without ready instructors in iniquitous practices. In the spring of the year, many of the workhouse boys discharge themselves, and live during the year, we have reason to believe, in no other ways than dishonestly; we know it in this way, that the most frequent circumstance under which we hear of them is, of their being in prison for offences. But they do not care a rush for the prisons, for they always say, "We live as well there as in the workhouse."

Then again, we cannot prevent conversations between young persons of the two sexes in the workhouse. They make signs to each other, and it is well known that a large proportion of them do meet each other. I think it necessary, in the first place, that the two sexes should live in totally distinct houses, so that they should never see each other. They should only be allowed liberty on different days. What we want now at Lambeth workhouse, if the sexes were kept in distinct establishments, would be a division of the yard.

How is it that the yard is not now separated?—The truth I believe to be, that the overseers remain so short a time in office, that even where they see it would be serviceable they do not like to make themselves unpopular by originating any expense. I do not say this with reference to our parish in particular, but with reference to parishes in general. There is doubtless much money squandered away in parishes, whilst too often the most important objects are neglected.

The next suggestion I have to offer is, that the power of punishing paupers for breaches of discipline is at present very insufficient. The only persons whom you cannot control by ordinary means are the youth of both sexes. I think that we should have more ready means of sending them to a prison, where the boys might be whipped and the girls kept for a time in solitary confinement.

[For further evidence respecting the management of the paupers in the workhouse of this parish, see the Evidence of Mr. Mott, the chief contractor. For evidence respecting the pauper children, see the evidence given by Dr. D'Oyley, the rector, under the head of "Education."]

Mr. George Huish, Assistant Overseer of the Parish of St. George, Southwark.

I HAVE lived in the parish upwards of 40 years, and have served office upwards of 12 years, and before that time I had cognizance of much parochial business with a relation.

It is an opinion, which every day's experience since I have been a parochial officer has confirmed in my mind, that one of the greatest misfortunes that has ever befallen the working classes, and the country at large, is the present system of the poor laws.

P. L. (A.)—III.

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The

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.

Want of the means
of classifying the
paupers.

The workhouse a
school of depreda-
tion.

Assignations be-
tween male and fe-
male paupers.

Power of punishing
paupers insufficient.

In the opinion of
the witness, the
poor laws the great-
est misfortune that
has ever befallen
the country.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.The out-door relief
the most mischie-
vous.Instances of the
impracticability of
detecting frauds
where out-door re-
lief is given.

The most injurious portion of the poor-law system is the out-door relief. I do not serve a day without seeing some new mischiefs arise from it. In the smaller parishes persons are liable to all sorts of influences. In such a parish as ours, where we administer relief to upwards of 2,000 out-door poor, it is utterly impossible to prevent considerable fraud, whatever vigilance is exercised.

Has the utmost vigilance been tried?—Suppose you go to a man's house as a visitor: you ask, where is Smith (the pauper)? You see his wife or his children, who say they do not know where he is, but that they believe he is gone in search of work. How are you to tell, in such a case, whether he is at work or not? It could only be by following him in the morning; and you must do that every day, because he may be in work one day, and not another. Suppose you have a shoemaker who demands relief of you, and you give it him on his declaring that he is out of work. You visit his place, and you find him in work; you say to him, as I have said to one of our own paupers, "Why, Edwards, I thought you said you had no work?" and he will answer, "Neither had I any; and I have only got a little job for the day." He will also say directly, "I owe for my rent; I have not paid my chandler's shop score; I have been summoned, and I expect an execution out against me, and if you stop my relief, I must come home," (that is, he must go into the workhouse). The overseer is immediately frightened by this, and says, "What a family that man has got! it will not do to stop his relief." So that, unless you have a considerable number of men to watch every pauper every day, you are sure to be cheated. Some of the out-door paupers are children, others are women; but, taking one with another, I think it would require one man's whole time to watch every twenty paupers.

Some time ago there was a shoemaker, who had a wife and family of four children, who demanded relief of the parish, and obtained an allowance of 5s. per week. He stated that he worked for Mr. Adderley, the shoemaker, who now lives in the High-street in the Borough. The man stated in applying for relief, that, however he worked, he could earn no more than 13s. per week. A respectable washerwoman informed me, that the way in which this family lived was such that she was convinced the man earned enough to support them honestly, without burthening the parish, and that it was a shame for him to receive relief. In consequence of this information I objected to the allowance; but one of the overseers, taking up the book, said, "But here is the account, signed by Mr. Adderley himself: can you doubt so respectable a man?" Still I was not satisfied; and I watched the man, and found him going to Mr. Pulbrook's, in Blackfriars-road. When the man quitted the shop, I went in and asked whether the man who had just left worked for them. Mr. Pulbrook stated that he did work for them, and had done so during the last 12 months; that he was one of the best shoemakers who had ever worked for him; that he earned only about 12s. a week, and that he (Mr. Pulbrook) regretted he had not more work for him. The man had left his book, which I borrowed. When the man came to the board, I said to him, "Do you know Mr. Pulbrook, of Blackfriars-road?" "Yes, I do, very well." "Do you ever work for him?" "I have done a job now and then for him." I then asked, whether he had not earned as much as 10s. or 12s. a week from him. His reply was, "No, never." I then produced the book between him and Mr. Pulbrook, from which it appeared that he had earned from 10s. to 12s. per week for the time stated. This took him by surprise, and he had no answer to make. The relief was refused him, and he never came again. I afterwards ascertained, that in addition to the 13s. a week which he earned from Mr. Adderley, and the 12s. a week which he earned from Mr. Pulbrook, his wife and himself worked for Mr. Drew, the slopseller, living at Newington Causeway, and earned 7s. a week from him. On the average of the year round they did not earn less than 30s. per week. The man was afterwards spoken to about the loss of the parish allowance, when he said, "I did not like to lose it: it was a d—d hard case: it was like a freehold to me, for I have had it these seven years."

No inspector would have found out such a case except by constant watching or favourable accidents. It might be supposed strange that a shoemaker could have earned no more than 12s. a week; but his answer was, that his bodily infirmities were such, that he could not sit long enough to enable him to earn more than such a sum. This morning, I said to a man of the name of Taylor, a tinman, who is receiving 4s. a week, "Taylor, how can you come here and waste your time to get your lazy shilling, whilst, if you staid at home, you might earn your honest 18d. and set your family a good example?" His reply was, "I have no work; I can't earn anything." I answered, "Why, every time I pass your house, except on relieving days, I always find you hammering." "Yes, so I may be, penny or twopenny jobs: will you find me work?" I replied, "That I could not seek pans to mend for him." He went away with his money. Had I positively challenged this man, the first question with the annual officers would have been, "What is your family?" "There are six of us," it would be replied. "What a family for a poor man to maintain!" exclaim the overseers; "let him have the money." The overseers are in perpetual fear of a man with his wife and family coming into the workhouse. They usually say, in such a case as this, "We pay 4s. per head for their keep in the workhouse; here is six times 4s.; what a difference this is! Let us keep them out at all risks." We have had instances of sawyers leaving their work and paying men to work for them, whilst they came and got relief. Within these few days we found out the case of a cabinet-maker named Baylis, working for a Mr. Edwards in Lambeth Walk, and at the same time receiving 6s. 6d. per week from us, under a pretence that he was out of work. In fact, such discoveries are perpetual.

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Does the practice of obtaining out-door relief extend amongst respectable classes of mechanics, whose work and means of living are tolerably good?—I am every week astonished by seeing persons come whom I never thought would have come. The greater number of our out-door paupers are worthless people; but still the number of decent people who ought to have made provision for themselves, and who come, is very great, and increasing. One brings another; one member of a family brings the rest of a family. Thus I find, in two days' relief, the following names:—"John Arundell, a sawyer, aged 55, his son William, aged 22, a wire-drawer; Ann Harris, 58, her husband is in Greenwich Hospital; her son John and his wife also came separately, so does their son, a lad aged 18, a smith." Thus we have pauper father, pauper wife, pauper son, and pauper grandchildren frequently applying on the same relief-day. One neighbour brings another. Not long since a very young woman, a widow, named Cope, who is not more than 20 years of age, applied for relief; she had only one child. After she had obtained relief, I had some suspicion that there was something about this young woman not like many others. I spoke to her, and pressed her to tell me the real truth as to how so decent a young woman as herself came to us for relief: she replied that she was "gored" into it. That was her expression. I asked her what she meant by being gored into it. She stated, that where she was living there were only five cottages, and that the inhabitants of four out of five of these cottages were receiving relief, two from St. Saviour's and two from Newington parish. They had told her that she was not worthy of living in the same place unless she obtained relief too. I was completely satisfied of the truth of her statement by inquiry. Her candour induced me to give her 5s., and I offered her a reception in the house for herself and child. The consequence was we never heard any more of her.

Indeed the malady of pauperism has not only got amongst respectable mechanics, but we find even persons who may be considered of the middle classes, such as petty masters, small master bricklayers, and other such persons, who have never before been seen making application to parish officers, now applying. My opinion is that they apply in consequence of having witnessed the ease with which others who might have provided for themselves obtain relief. They naturally say, "Why should we be content with half a loaf when we might have a whole one?" A few days ago a man applied for relief, stating that he was in great distress. On inquiry it was found that he held a situation as packer, and actually received wages of the amount of 20s. per week at the time he made the application, and had been in the receipt of them for some time previous. We found that one woman had received relief from us for two years, whilst she was receiving from the East India Company a pension of 70l. per annum. In one instance we discovered that a man, named James Peaton, was receiving relief of six different parishes; he belonged to our parish, and he had picked out five other parishes, which gave relief on the five other days. He made it his entire business to live on parish pensions, and he received one week's pension every day.

A laundress living in the Kingsland-road came to our house to select some girls as apprentices. Whilst she was in waiting one of the names of one of the women, an out-door pauper, struck her, and she inquired about it. She stated that this woman, who was receiving from us 3s. 6d. per week was washing for her five days of the week, at 2s. per day wages, and her victuals, and might work the six, but that she stated she had a wealthy uncle whom she visited and did work for on the Thursday, expecting that he would leave her something. "And this," (the parish) said the laundress, "is her uncle!" When the woman was charged with the fraud, she boldly avowed it, saying, "Who the d—l would work for 2s. a day and victuals, when by going over the water, 3s. 6d. a day might be got without work." She was offered the workhouse, but she refused, and has never since received relief from the parish. This pension she had received during several years, though she had during the same time received good wages from the same laundress.

What do you think would be the effect of putting an end altogether to the system of out-door relief, and enacting that all persons should either be wholly on or wholly off the parish, and that those who are on should be relieved in a strict workhouse?—I am convinced that in the first year of any attempt to take all the poor into the workhouse, no more than one in ten of the out-door paupers will remain in the parish, and that this tenth person would, in a great proportion of the cases, do so to tease them.

I am convinced that in the second year not one out of twenty of the out-door poor would remain chargeable to the parish.

Do you assume that the workhouses are to be conducted much as at present?—Nearly the same; but all the workhouses should be managed alike, which can only be done by Government, for whilst the world lasts parishes will not unite to do anything.

But what do you think would be the effect if the regimen of the workhouse for the young and able-bodied were more rigid than at present, that is, if, for example, the diet for the young and able-bodied were reduced to the level of that on which a Highlander or a hard-working Irish labourer lives?—Of course the reduction of pauperism would be the more rapid; no set of gentlemen would prescribe a diet which was not found sufficient.

On what grounds do you form your opinion that the reduction of pauperism would be at the rate you mention?—As a practical man, I form my opinion on the proportion who have always, since I have been in office, refused to go into the workhouse when it has been offered them, and the instances where they have continued to get their living without parochial relief.

There is a great expectation that Government will exercise extensive powers.

P. L. (A.)—III.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.

Extension of the
claims for out-door
relief amongst
mechanics.

And amongst small
tradesmen.

Probable effect of
the abolition of out-
door relief.

Probable effect of
good workhouse
management.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

OUT-DOOR
RELIEF.

Reaction of prison
discipline on work-
house management.

Do you find any effects resulting to workhouse management from the state of prison discipline?—It is astonishing that we are so quiet in our workhouse, from what I have heard of the keep of persons in prisons, which is better even than of persons in the workhouses. A short time ago a man named Abbot was refused the amount of out-door relief which he claimed; we told him, "We cannot give you what you want." He said that "He must and would have it." We told him he must get work; he said he could not get work, and would not seek work; he would sooner go into prison. I told him that if he did not take care he would get into prison: "You have been in prison already," said I, "and you would hardly wish to go there again." "Indeed I don't care," said he; "I can live better there than I can anywhere out of prison." "But if you go on in this way you will get transported." "You are mistaken," said he, "if you suppose I care for being transported; I know well enough that if I am, I shall be better taken care of, and shall live like a gentleman." He proved that he did not care for a prison, for he conducted himself so outrageously, that we were compelled to take him before a magistrate, who committed him to Brixton. This was the fourth or fifth time he had been at Brixton on our account. This man had been brought up as a mechanic, in a branch in which, had he been a man of good character, he might now obtain good wages.

Now this case, with others, affords an instance of what might be done by workhouse discipline. Mr. Hayes, who farms the paupers of several parishes, is a very intelligent man, his mode of action is, to give the refractory hard work and a spare diet. He will place a man by himself, with nothing but a dead wall before him: he then puts in his hands a certain quantity of oakum, and tells him, "When you have picked that your dinner will be ready for you, and not till then." We sent this man to Mr. Hayes, but he soon got tired of it, and left it, and we heard no more of him. This morning I met him coming in the direction of Billingsgate with a basket of fish on his head, and apparently in an honest employment. We sent three refractory boys to this occupation, and two out of the three preferred going to sea.

During the last 10 years there were 882 removals to parishes within 12 miles of London. During the same period there were only 91 removals beyond the 12 miles.

One man to every 20 would be required to watch the paupers living out of the parish, and one man to watch every 100 living within the parish.

Since the inquiry has been made, I have stationed persons at well-known gin-shops to observe the number of paupers who came and the money they spend, and from all their statements I have drawn the conclusion that 30*l.* out of every 100*l.* of the money given as out-door relief is spent in the gin-shops during the same day.

One officer, Mr. Hunter, did come armed with a brace of pistols, in consequence of having been assaulted by desperate paupers and being threatened; others have come armed with sticks.

The number of empty houses has greatly increased in our parish. The number of persons summoned for non-payment of rates has increased from 100 to 800 within the last seven years.

Unless an alteration of the English poor law takes place, I am fearful that the Irish labourers will obtain a more extensive footing in England than they now have; and they will be sure to do so, because the present system keeps the English labourers shut up in their parishes.

Mr. J. Longmore.

IN St. George's parish, Southwark, we have four overseers, two of whom are chosen on Easter Tuesday and two on Michaelmas-day, so that there are always two in office who understand the routine of business. They take it in turn to be relieving overseer, that is, to receive and pay all monies, and to keep all the accounts of the expenditure generally; this they do for three months. Their accounts are audited twice a year, in January and July, and a detailed statement published and distributed among the rate-payers. The auditors are chosen on Easter Tuesday from the past overseers.

Should this part of the system continue, I would suggest the following alterations: I would say, let it be compulsory upon all parishes in and round London to keep a banker; let the money be paid in to this banker by the collectors, not in the name of the relieving overseer, but in that of the parish, and let all cheques be signed by three overseers (where there are four), or by one overseer and one churchwarden; let the accounts of the relieving overseer be audited within one month of his ceasing to act in that character; for instance, I was relieving overseer from the 1st October to the 1st January, my accounts were not audited till the July following, and I might have kept a large balance during the intervening months, have become bankrupt in the course of the time, and it would all have been lost; in fact, an overseer of this parish did keep a balance in his hands for some months of upwards of 4,000*l.*, which, however, was not lost. I think also, that when an overseer demands a rate, he should be prepared to show the necessity of it, by giving a complete debtor and creditor account of the state of the parish funds, and also a statement, as near as might be, of the probable expense of the ensuing three months. I did this, as under, which was quite a novelty in the parish; and although there is not a vestry takes place without much squabbling, and there was a strong party feeling existing against the officers, yet it proved so satisfactory, that it obtained for them an unanimous vote of thanks. I produce it here, because it serves to show the relative proportions of the rate actually expended for the poor and for that

Vestrymen have
come to the vestry
armed.

other purposes. Much contention has taken place in some of the metropolitan parishes as to the right of the overseer to demand what amount of rate he pleases; some contending that it was for the rate-payers in vestry assembled to decide upon the amount of the rate. I believe the law gives this power to the overseer, because he is compelled to relieve the poor under certain penalties. I am decidedly of opinion that such power is advantageous. The great bulk of the rate-payers do not know, and cannot understand, the necessities of the case, and in parishes where party feeling exists, too low a sum would be allowed, and it would be impossible to go on with the relief.

PRESUMED DEFECTS in the POOR LAWS, and in their ADMINISTRATION, and
PROPOSED REMEDIES.

DEFECTS.

1. IN all the Metropolitan parishes there is one principal day of relief to the out-door poor; but as it is on various days in various parishes, it opens a door for much imposition, many of the paupers getting relief from one parish on one day, and from another on another.

2. The in-door poor in the Metropolis are by no means well regulated, generally speaking: there is a want of classification; a want of sufficient work, and too great a facility of going out, so that persons of confirmed idleness would settle down there for life if not forced out. Some of our poor are like swallows; they quit the workhouse in the spring, and return to it the beginning of winter. A stricter discipline was attempted in our workhouse some years ago, but it caused a riot; the magistrates took their part, and it was dropped.

3. The appeal which the poor possess from the parochial authorities to the magistrates, or rather, the almost certain result of that appeal, is an evil of the greatest magnitude, and requires revision perhaps more than any other part of the poor-laws. I speak more particularly as to the Metropolitan parishes; for the overseers in the rural districts are, I believe, very frequently quite a different description of persons to those of the Metropolis, with respect to education, &c. &c. There seems to be, I know not why, an unaccountable prejudice against the overseer. I have no doubt the Dictionary will soon contain such an item as this, "Overseer, s., a man who manages the relief to the poor; an unfeeling, hard-hearted wretch." Why should this be? They have the same feelings as their fellow-men; they are usually chosen from the most respectable class of parishioners; and there can be no possible reason why they should have a bias or prejudice against the poor. Yet, in every case are they held up as creatures devoid of pity; and the magistrates, in their decision of the cases that come before them connected with the administration of the poor-laws, feel, I verily believe, their liability to be shown up in the newspapers if they do not lean to the side of the pauper. Witness the attacks upon Mr. Walker, who alone has had the courage to side with the officers. Now the fact is this: nearly the whole of the cases that come before the magistrates have already undergone inquiry and consideration; some have been rejected for continued drunkenness; some are cases of disputed settle-

P. L. (A.)—III.

PROPOSED REMEDIES.

1. LET every parish be compelled to pay their out-door poor on the same day, and at the same time of day; for paupers get relieved sometimes at Lambeth in the morning of Thursday, and at St. George's in the evening of that day. It is worthy of consideration how far it is possible to have no out-door poor. If it were possible to house them all, and the workhouses were so conducted, on one general system, as that it was not considered a boon to be sent there, (always excepting the blind, the impotent, aged, &c.) but from being made to work, and subject to strict discipline, they might find it really a hardship to be there, I feel confident the amount of London paupers would be greatly diminished.

2. There should be one general rule for the management of workhouses, laid down by Act of Parliament, as regards diet, employment, classification, education of the children, and permission of going out, distinguishing the aged, blind, &c. from those capable of labour. Presuming that fixed times of relief were appointed for the out-door poor in every parish, those in workhouses should never be suffered to go out at those times.

3. Let the police magistrates cease to have any control whatever over the administration of the poor-laws; I should think they would gladly relinquish it. Let a person or persons be appointed possessed of the same powers that are now vested in those magistrates, but having no other duty to perform but that connected with the poor-laws; that is to say, the appeals of the poor from the parochial officers, (I am inclined to think, upon the whole, that some such appeal is necessary, even in the Metropolis); the punishment of refractory paupers; the business relating to passing paupers to their settlement; the apportioning the rewards in cases of fire; granting summonses for non-payment of parochial rates; hearing and deciding upon the cases, &c. &c. I should say, that two persons would be sufficient to superintend this business for half a dozen parishes; but this would be subject to deliberation. The greatest care would be requisite in the selection of these persons. They should not only have a competent knowledge of the poor-laws, but should be practically acquainted with their administration. The payment of these persons would occasion a very small charge upon the respective parishes, not at all an object when divided amongst them, and set in opposition to the good which, I feel assured, would be effected. It may be objected that there would be many more applicants to these persons for relief than there are at present to the police magistrates. My answer is, there might so perhaps, particularly at the outset, until the unworthy pauper found that his case was inquired into, and that relief

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ment; others demand more relief than it has been thought requisite to give them. I believe that most relieving overseers come into office with a wish and determination to do their duty to the parish and to the poor; for it must not be forgotten that the parishioners expect him not to spend more of their money than is absolutely necessary. Well, he is beset by sturdy, idle vagabonds, by known drunkards, by prostitutes; his house is not his own: he refuses them relief; they are riotous; they threaten him; they annoy him in every possible way; and the worst and most unworthy characters are always the most importunate, and the most persevering. He appeals to the magistrate for protection; the cases are partially heard; and he is ordered to relieve them. He finds this to be the case time after time; and, after vain struggles against it, he gives it up in despair, resolves to get through his duties as quietly as he can, and gives away the parish money unresistingly.

The magistrate also finds it an irksome, unpleasant duty, and gets through it as quickly as possible; and indeed he has not time to inquire into half the cases that come before him. It was but the other day the magistrate at the Town-hall in the Borough angrily said, "It is worth 5,000*l.* a year to attend to the paupers of St. George's parish alone."

4. A proper pride and a strong sense of shame formerly prevented the poor from applying to the parish for relief, and they were careful and frugal in their expenditure lest they should be compelled to do so. That feeling, if it have not entirely ceased, at least prevails in very few cases in the Metropolis; it is no longer a disgrace to receive relief. If a few inhabitants of a court or alley, or bye-street, are receiving relief, they will almost glory in it, and will persuade others to apply for it. I have been told often of such language as this being used: "Such a one gets so much, and I get so and so; why don't you apply? Tell them, if you do not get 2*s.* or 3*s.* a week from them, you must come into the workhouse; and if they will not, why go to the alderman at the Town-hall, and he will make them." When they once receive relief it is a rare instance for them to leave it off entirely; it seems to debase their faculties, to destroy their energies, and to take away the desire to support themselves; it appears to be, once a pauper always a pauper; for if you shake them off in the summer, they surely return in the winter. In places where a portion of the wages is paid from the poor-rates, I should think these debasing feelings must prevail in an extraordinary degree; but it is a pitiable case indeed, where the labourer toils through a long day for such miserable wages, that he must of necessity be a pauper at the same time.

5. The cheapness of gin I consider an evil as relates to the poor laws, inasmuch as it tends to promote the consumption of it, and the great bulk of the consumers are of that class who press most heavily upon the parochial funds; it demoralizes the mind, and diminishes that pride and self-respect which formerly kept so many from applying for relief. I have no doubt that the increase of beer and cyder-shops in the country has a tendency to the same effect; but I should think these shops a benefit rather than an evil in the Metropolis and other large towns where gin is much drank.

relief was not ordered as a matter of course. I think the number of applications would materially decrease after a short time; at all events, they would be much better attended to, the real case of distress would be more likely to be separated from those of imposition, and I verily believe a considerable saving would be effected to the various parishes. Connected with this, I would have lists of the names and residences of all the out-door paupers hung up in the office, a separate list for each parish, corrected and published twice a year.

4. I am of opinion that the great mass of the working classes, having lost that proud feeling which prevented their applying for parochial relief, and being notoriously improvident when they have employ, and looking to the poor-rates as a resource in case of sickness or loss of work, should be compelled to contribute to the heavy burdens this loss of feeling and this improvidence occasion; and I would suggest that it be done thus: Let every person, male or female, in employ contribute 1*d.* per week from their wages to the poor-rates; let the employer stop it, and let him be answerable for it. A printed paper might be left once or perhaps twice a year, to be filled up by each housekeeper, he to be liable for the ensuing six months for the number actually in his employ on the 1st of January and the 1st of July; a fine to be imposed for an incorrect return; the amount to be paid to the poor-rate collector when he collects the poor-rates quarterly.

I would not make any difference as to the different amount of wages, on account of the great difficulty that would attend it, and there would be the less necessity, as this trifling sum could not and would not be felt by the working classes; small as it is, however, I calculate that it would produce in this parish (St. George, Southwark) from 3,000*l.* to 4,000*l.* per annum.

This, I am aware, is a bold scheme; but I think it worth consideration, on account of its importance.

5. Let the duty which was taken off gin be again imposed, for that the consumption has increased greatly is notorious; and we need only point to the splendid establishments fitted up in every direction, shining with marble, brass and gilded ornaments, to vouch for the goodness of the trade; and yet I would not by any means throw it open. Let the occupiers of such shops be still upon their good behaviour; let all drinking places be subject to the same surveillance as at present; above all, let licensed victuallers (in the Metropolis and in large towns at any rate) be compelled strictly to close their shops at 10 o'clock at night, (the same hour that the beer-shops are obliged to close,) and let them not be open at all on the Sunday, or if they must open on the Sabbath, at any rate let them not be

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6. The necessity of sending a person with paupers when passed to a distant settlement, from London to Wales or Yorkshire, for instance, is an evil for more reasons than one: it makes the parish unwilling to incur so heavy an expense, and they go on relieving the parties month after month, and mostly in an ungracious manner, telling them they do not belong, and grinding them down to the merest pittance; so that it is both a hardship upon the parish and upon the poor objects who apply for relief.

opened till one o'clock on that day. It is incalculable the wages that are spent in these places late on the Saturday night, and on the Sunday mornings. Let it not be supposed the revenue would suffer: the same amount of money would be spent, but more for the benefit of the great bulk of the community; and the tea, coffee, sugar, &c. &c., in which it would be expended, would contribute greatly to the comforts of their families.

6. Let them be passed from county to county in the same way that the Irish are passed, and let the expense be paid by the treasurer of the county from the county-rates, by which means it would fall equally upon the county at large. There could be no objection to this, because the whole county-rate is a charge upon the poor-rates. I would add, if the parish should appeal against the order of removal *successfully*, let them be removed back at the sole expense of the parish obtaining the order. This would make them tolerably certain of the settlement before they did it. If this plan should be objected to, at any rate let the paupers to be passed home be sent to an agent residing in or near the place they are going, to be by him delivered, with a copy of the order, to the overseer. It would do away with many a pleasant excursion of parish officers, but would be attended by a very considerable saving, especially to the parishes of the Metropolis. I am inclined to think that a residence of 10 years should constitute a settlement without reference to rent; and I see not why this principle might not be extended to Scotch and Irish. It would simplify the law of settlement in some measure, now a most complex affair; and I think the labour of so many years gives the pauper some sort of claim upon the parish in which he has been so long resident.

7. What are called suspended orders of removal I should pronounce an evil, as they open a door for much imposition. A case in point came before me while I was overseer: a family was removed to Lambeth, and the charge of our parish surgeon, during the suspension of the order, was 5*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*, which sum was paid me by that parish. I presume, however, they thought the doctor's charge high, for a week afterwards they sent us home a similar case, with a doctor's bill appended to it of 5*s.* 1*s.* 6*d.* This was evidently done on purpose, as a set-off against ours.

7. Let suspended orders be done away with altogether: it would be as fair for one parish as another. Some parishes never do take them out. I set my face decidedly against them while I remained in office, after the transaction here alluded to.

The doctors benefit, but the parish suffers. Some charge as much for their attendance upon paupers as they would if it were a person well able to pay for it. An old vestry clerk informed me that his parish had felt this to be an evil of such importance, that the officers had sent a person many miles in the country to see one of their paupers detained under a suspended order.

Mr. Rawlins, Clerk to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Parish of
St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

HAS been in office in this parish eight years; filled a parochial office at St. Pancras twenty years.

The parish is divided into nine wards, at the head of which there is an overseer. In our parish the overseer collects the rates and relieves the poor of the ward to which he is attached.

The main benefit of this arrangement is, that it saves the poundage, as these nine gentlemen perform the duties which the parish would otherwise have to pay two collectors for performing; this sum would be about 400*l.* a year. About one-eighth of the rates is not collected. I believe that these overseers, from their knowledge, collect quite as closely as any paid officers. With regard to the relief of the poor, I think that would be best administered by paid officers. The disadvantage of the present system is, that gentlemen have different dispositions; one gentleman will give a couple of shillings where another would only give one; these officers are changed constantly, and have not the requisite experience;

Relief best administered by paid officers.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

*Local information
contributed by the
members of a board
locally chosen,
worthless.*

their local connexions and affections are more liable to mislead the judgment than to inform it; if a report were made by a gentleman with respect to any one in his own immediate neighbourhood who claimed relief, I would prefer the report of the paid officer of experience with relation to the applicant, even though that applicant were a person under the daily observation of the unpaid overseer; the paid officer, from his practice and consequent knowledge of the habits of the poor, would be less liable to be deceived; the paid officer would, from practice, be better able to resist undue claims, being more in the habit of doing so. Men of the class usually appointed to the office of beadle consult their own ease, and are likely to yield to the obstinate poor, while they are brutal to the deserving; but an officer of a higher grade of intelligence would not do this. In the instances where assistant overseers, or the paid agents, report to a board on the cases for relief, the local information contributed by the gentlemen constituting the board is usually, in the great mass of cases, a mere trifle; it is of an amount not worth obtaining, and never will be in such a parish as St. Pancras, or in a parish such as ours. The paid officer obtains his information from personal inspection and inquiry, the other repeats only what he has been told. In London the residence is not so permanent as in the country; here we know nothing of the people in the next street; often nothing of the people living in the next house; an old inhabitant's knowledge of the people in a street in London is very different to an old inhabitant's knowledge of the other inhabitants of a street of the same extent in the country towns. If there are paid officers, I do not think it material from what part of the parish the controlling or inspecting body is chosen. The local information is so inconsiderable as not to make it worth while to make exertions to obtain persons having knowledge of particular neighbourhoods.

In a large proportion of cases the applicants have been brought to the condition to require relief, not by the pressure of unavoidable circumstances, but from indolence, improvidence and avowed vice; the persons who are the most clamorous are persons of the worst character.

The able-bodied labourers, who are out-door paupers, are employed at stone-breaking; they do not earn one-half, and oftentimes not one-third, what they might; formerly 3 s. the square yard was given for stone-breaking; now, as we do not think it right to give the same price as public bodies, for if we did there would be a set always with us, we only give 2 s. 6 d. the square yard; in summer time a good workman will break a square yard of stone in a day; others, from their idleness, will not break more than two yards in a week; there is some skill requisite for the quickest work, but the skill does not usually make the difference in the work. About five per cent. of the able-bodied applicants who are told they must go to stone-breaking, leave us; another five per cent. leave us when they have had a short trial of it.

Pauper labour.

Effects of hard
labour, if it could be
got.

By hard work and by low diet imposed on the able-bodied, so as to reduce them in condition below the lowest grade of workmen out of the house, much below it, we should get rid of one-half of our able-bodied poor.

By the late Apprenticing Act almost one-half of our bindings may be baffled; notice is to be given to the parishes where the boys are bound.

Magistrates' adjudications of settlement cases.

I have had more than four orders of examination refused during my service. My knowledge, from my experience, is greater in parochial cases than that of the magistrate; I do not want his advice; and if he were to set his knowledge against mine, I should consider it presumptuous. I think that it would be advantageous to have the orders of removal made entirely on the responsibility of the parishes; it would save great expense, and would greatly facilitate this portion of the parochial business. In other cases, where two magistrates are required, as in cases of the adjudication on orders of affiliation, and also in the cases of binding apprentices, one magistrate virtually does perform the business; and it would save all the inconvenience resulting from the occasional want of a second magistrate, if this same business were allowed to be nominally performed, as it now is, really by one.

It would be of advantage to have the parochial business of the metropolis transacted by one office, provided it were not at an inconvenient distance.

MANAGEMENT IN LARGER DISTRICTS. CENTRAL CONTROL. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT.

[On these heads see also the evidence of Mr. W. Russell, *ante*, p. 51: Mr. R. L. Jones, p. 86: Mr. Myles, p. 88: Mr. Gregory, p. 117: Mr. Brushfield, p. 123: Mr. Waite, p. 142: Mr. Single, pp. 147 & 148: Mr. Leach, p. 173.]

Mr. Thomas John Holland.

I WAS in office 11 years as assistant overseer to the parish of Bermondsey. My father had been in office 30 years before me, and I performed the duties for some time for him.

I am now clerk to Mr. Serjeant Wilde.

Attornies who manage parochial business should be paid by salary.

Permanent officers should be more independent and better paid.

The main government of parishes is undoubtedly in their permanent officers, the chief of which are vestry-clerk, for the general business, the assistant overseer, for the out-door poor, and the workhouse-keeper for the in-door poor. But there are many circumstances which diminish their efficiency. I do not see that the business of a parish can well be carried on by a vestry clerk, unless he is an attorney; but I think it would be very good economy to provide that he should be paid for all his services by salary. With respect to the other officers, they ought to be more independent of the control of annual officers, who have no knowledge, and that they should be better paid.

I have

I have long considered it absolutely necessary, as a means of retrieving parishes, that there should be some central and independent control. It is in the highest degree important that their management should be uniform, and the parishes never have been, and never will be, got to agree together. We frequently tried to get the several parishes to agree in paying their paupers on the same day, in order to prevent the frauds committed by paupers, who obtain pensions from several parishes, but we never could succeed; for no one day suited the personal convenience of the annual officers, and those personal conveniences always overruled the claims of

Central control absolutely necessary to retrieve parishes. Parish management should be uniform, but they never can be got to agree together.

A considerable amount of money would be saved in the prevention of litigation if there were some control by a central authority. They might also agree in the uniform treatment of their paupers, and the general management of their affairs. What I have thought of has been some board, composed of delegates from the various parishes, something like the incorporated hundreds; but besides these there ought to be some control from a board or body of commissioners by the Legislature. From what I have seen of hundred management, it is quite clear that there are many good points of it which the separate parishes could never attain, whilst as between hundred and hundred there are great and mischievous differences of management which can only be remedied by a superior control extending over the whole parochial management of the kingdom. One very great advantage of management by boards for extensive districts would be, that clever men would have a more extensive influence; and able permanent officers would get into situations where they might render themselves more useful. At present, the usefulness of an able officer never scarcely extends beyond the narrow limits of his own parish, in the way of example or otherwise. I think it would be eligible that a commissioner rather than a magistrate should preside at this board.

There might be some management like that of the incorporated hundreds.

Great and mischievous differences of management, as between hundred and hundred, which ought to be prevented by superior control.

When in office I found that the provisions of the 59th Geo. 3, c. 12, enabling parish officers to stop the wages of merchant seamen, and to receive those of men in the King's service, provisions of the greatest utility. They were satisfactory to the well-disposed poor, and the parishes were greatly benefited. I have had deserted wives express the highest gratitude for wages saved from vagabond and unprincipled husbands. I have no doubt that these provisions might be profitably extended to all classes of workmen. It would also produce the beneficial effect of making the relief a debt, instead of a right. Parish officers would not make the deduction from wages too heavy.

Use of a power of making deductions from wages to repay parochial charges.

Are there in Bermondsey any classes of workmen who, after having for long periods obtained high wages, have thrown themselves on the parish during any temporary suspension of work?—Yes, the leather-dressers, who, during nine months of the year, have obtained from 20 s. to 40 s. a week, and many of them from 40 s. to 50 s. a week, and have nevertheless thrown themselves entirely on the parish during the intervals.

What has been the conduct of the men obtaining high wages, 40 s. or 50 s. a week, as compared with those who obtained less wages; were those who obtained high wages less frequently burthensome to the parish?—No; the men who received high wages as frequently applied as the rest. There is a class of mechanics who have less wages, namely, the tanners' labourers, who earn about a pound a week, and are less frequently chargeable to the parish, and are, on the whole, much more respectable in their conduct.

What do you think would be the effect of a provision giving parish officers a lien on the wages of persons who had received relief, and enabling them (the parish officers) to order the employer of the person who had received relief to put by a portion due to him, when he is again in employment?*

Edmund Ludlow, Esq., of 17, Union-street, St. George's, Southwark.

I WAS overseer of St. Saviour's parish, and I was afterwards warden. The charities in that parish can scarcely be less than 10,000 l. per annum; these were bequests chiefly with relation to specific purposes.

When I was in office the poor came in great numbers to me (that is, mendicants, Irish principally,) to claim relief; I happened to have a great deal of leisure; when the first applications were made, I believed all that was stated to me. I was induced to give to numbers to whom I should not have given any relief had I known them. All the overseers with whom I have conversed acknowledge that the same thing was done by them: that there is a number of persons who make it a point to seek out and apply to all new overseers. The paupers have been accustomed to apply to overseers in different names. The overseers finding themselves frequently imposed upon, at length they begin to refer the applicants to their weekly meetings. It may be laid down as a general rule, that all overseers on their first entrance to office are extensively imposed upon. In all the parishes in London, relief for any district should only be given by one person, and that one person a permanent officer; he might be under the control of a parish board, and the board might, at their weekly meetings, direct relief.

Impositions on Overseers.

In my opinion, there should be one uniform rate for the whole kingdom. In our parish sleep the poor who work in the city of London. It is the same with other parishes in the vicinity of the city; they sleep the poor who work in the wealthier districts. In consequence

There should be one uniform rate for the whole kingdom.

* See further evidence of this Witness, under the head "Irish Labourers."

MANAGEMENT
AND CENTRAL
CONTROL.

*A national rate
should be admi-
nistered by local
officers.*

*All settlements
should be abolished.*

*The next best thing
to national rates
would be county
rates.*

of the removal of persons to form the improvements and approaches to the New London-bridge and the Southwark-bridge, the poor have resorted in greater numbers to the adjacent parishes.

I do not contemplate any alterations in the present constitution of parishes, with the exception of appointing a permanent officer to apply the relief. I would do away with all the present modes of settlement, and give relief to the parties on the spot where they happen to be; this would save immense expense in litigation and in removals. I have no doubt that the savings in preventing the frauds resulting from the ignorance of officers would be considerable; though the permanent officer should be well paid. The next best thing to a uniform rate throughout the whole country, would be rates for districts analagous to counties; for the metropolis, for instance, there is good reason for making one uniform rate, comprehending the whole; the rate might be levied on the aggregate present rental of the district. In my opinion, the interest which the wealthier districts would have in looking after the population of the poorer parishes, for which they now do not care, would more than counterbalance the loss of interest or responsibility in the administrations of relief in the poorer parishes. If a permanent officer were not appointed as overseer, I think there would be great waste on the plan I propose.

Mr. John East Dix, Assistant Overseer of St. Giles's.

*National rate re-
commended.*

I THINK that the great remedy for the present maladministration of the poor laws is to equalize the rates throughout the kingdom, and for Government to take the management of it.

*Advantages deri-
vable from Govern-
ment management or
Government control
of the administration
of the Poor Laws.*

What do you consider would be the advantages of this system?—One part of the kingdom would not be burthened more than another; the management of the poor being in larger masses under Government, the management would be much better and cheaper: labour might then be provided which cannot be provided now. In many of the parishes of tolerable size they cannot provide any work whatever. This is on account of their being so small. I am no advocate for making manufactories of workhouses, which interfere with the industry of the country; but I have no doubt that Government, or a central management, might find labour in public works which would not interfere with the labour of the country. Another reason is, that the smaller parishes cannot afford to pay for efficient officers to conduct in the systematic way which is requisite. In the course of my business I have had to meet the parish officers of the country parishes, who are low illiterate men, utterly incapable of managing any business in a proper manner.

*Parishes unable to
provide proper work-
houses or proper
officers.*

*Or the classification
obtainable by a com-
bination of work-
houses.*

Have you ever considered what would be the effect of uniting several parishes, so as to apply their workhouses to combined use, for the purpose of classification; as thus, suppose your parish united to another with a workhouse as large as your own, and that in the one workhouse all the males were put, and in the other all the females?—I have always considered that this would be one great advantage of a central management throughout the kingdom. You would thus obtain the means of classification to any extent necessary. Even in our parish we feel very great difficulties in the way of classification.

Mr. John Crook, of the Parish of St. Clement Danes.

*Prepared to state
that Poor Laws do
more harm than
good.*

FROM all my experience, which extends over nearly 30 years, I am prepared to say, that such is the state and the alarming progress of the system, and so great are all the evils essential to it, that all measures should be taken to put an end to it as gradually but speedily as practicable; for I am convinced that no evils could ensue from the want of poor laws equal to those occasioned by the poor laws themselves.

*Simplification of
settlements.*

*Prevention of liti-
gation on removals.*

And what remedies have you considered available?—The first proceeding would be to simplify the removal of paupers and the law of settlement. The alteration in the law settlement would be the present settlement of bastard children, or a birth settlement, with this distinction, that until the child is of an age to be separated from the parent, it should follow the parent's settlement, or be relieved in the parish where the parents reside, or where the parents are themselves relieved. With respect to removals, paupers should not be removed until a statement of the case on which they are removed has been sent to the parish to which they are removed, (and the parish removing should not be allowed to depart from this statement), and time has been allowed for the investigation of the case.

*Management in
larger districts, and
by combinations of
workhouses.*

The next proceeding would be, to get a combined management of workhouses and parishes in larger districts, so that the paupers in the workhouses might be better classified, and a distinct workhouse be assigned to each class. The great complaint at present is, that we have not enough of any one sort of paupers to find them separate work, nor are the workhouses, generally speaking, large enough; neither are the stock of hands sufficiently permanent. We may have a number of mechanics one week and not enough the next.

*Defective means in
the existing pa-
rishes.*

But this could not be the case in a classification from a large district. There is scarcely any workhouse in which they make all the things they require in the house. But this might be done with larger management. The whole of the parishes of Westminster should be governed under one head.

This combination should be governed by a board of commissioners or delegates from the several parishes. The separate parishes should have no liberty of dissent, which would only

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be a liberty of thwarting measures for the general good. Under such a system, where the management was upon a large scale, the supplies would of course be by contract, and at a very reduced rate.

The effect of this management would be to get rid of much of the corruption incident to the connexions of parties in small parishes or districts, where one set of tradesmen judge another set of tradesmen's bills, and often order goods at the expense of the parish, if not from themselves, from their immediate relations. These connexions would have small influence on a large board, more under the public eye. Tradesmen frequently interfere to prevent the due application of the pauper labour. There may be on the board of a small parish a baker, or a shoemaker, or a tailor, who, it may be supposed, will not co-operate very cordially in any plan for making the paupers bake their own bread, or make their own shoes and clothes.

The administration of relief to the parties by a large and respectable board would be more free from local influences. A landlord of small tenements could not influence the grants of relief to his tenants, nor could trade or family connexions operate so powerfully as they may be supposed to do in most of the present parishes. Each would probably be a check upon the other.

At present a tradesman is liable to injury if he administers relief impartially. I may state an instance of this. Mr. Rose, the keeper of a spirit-shop in Clare-street, Clare-market, served the office of overseer. During that service he found, amongst the applicants for relief, many of his own customers, who were drunken and dissipated. He censured them for their profligate habits, and the indulgence in spirituous liquors. He was ruined in his business in consequence, as it was considered, of his mode of conducting himself as an overseer. I have myself heard a pauper say, in reply to the censure of this tradesman, that though the charge of drunkenness were true, he was the last man who ought to have made it or acted upon it.

One general system of rating should also be established.

At present the rates are very unequally, or very corruptly levied. Tradesmen will rate friends in a friendly way. They will say that they know such a one: that he is in business, and they are sure that he cannot afford to pay heavy rates, for he is losing by his business.

The poor know of our parish having an estate, and the consequence is, that it is reputed to be a rich parish, and we believe it increases the demands upon us.

Those who have forged papers generally come to the new overseers.

Soon after Easter they come with the view of getting relief. "Overseer hunters." One woman comes almost in a state to fall to pieces, and goes to a shopkeeper, stating that they can go no further; he has a carriage at the door. If she remains at his door, he may lose custom; when he says, "Shall I lose money myself, or give it out of the parish pocket." He decides upon giving the parish money. They also come at night, when illness is pretended, and being afraid that they will remain chargeable, magistrates give orders without swearing the poor to residence.

Annual officers are incompetent, from want of knowledge, and want of inclination to obtain that knowledge. In some very small parishes the knowledge is obtained to a greater extent from the continued service of officers: there being a difficulty in obtaining a constant change of officers, the same person is compelled to serve frequently.

Under a larger system of administration, education might be found for the children, which would make them turn out better than they now do.

We find the boys educated in our parish turn out extremely bad; the badness has greatly increased.

(For the farther examination of the witness on this topic, see the title, "Education.")

I have been connected with the parish 29 years.

We have continual delay and expense from the want of two magistrates to sign orders of removal and to hear bastardy cases. In my opinion, orders of removal ought to be left to the responsibility of the parish-officers, who are indeed now responsible. At least, I consider they might be entrusted with such power in the metropolis. In the country, the magistrates do examine the cases of removal. Those vestry-clerks who are solicitors may have an interest in getting orders of removal, but that is not the case with me, I have a salary; but I do not recollect an instance where the magistrates in London have interposed to check the operation of the interest of attornies in getting orders of removal.

In those instances where the vestry-clerks are non-professional, we receive more frequent communications, and on the whole the proceedings are less costly; at least such has been my experience.

Where the masters of the workhouses receive a poundage on the labour of the workmen in the houses, it is the interest of the masters to get labouring men into the house, and keep all the others out of the house.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick, Esq.

LARGE
DISTRICTS.
MANAGEMENT
AND CENTRAL
CONTROL.*Corruption of annual unpaid officers diminished by management on a large scale.**The administration of relief on a large scale more pure.**Administration of relief by tradesmen who are overseers.*

Orders of removal; delay from the signature of two magistrates being requisite.

Vestry clerks; professional and non-professional.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

CONTRACT
MANAGEMENT ON
A LARGE SCALE.

Circumstances
which led witness
to engage as a con-
tractor to victual
workhouses.

Has transactions
with about forty
parishes.

Saving by contract
one-third, and
supply better.

Difference between
contract manage-
ment and manage-
ment by the
overseers.

Attention to small
savings.

Freedom of the
markets to the
contractor.

Tradesmen give
bribes to parish
officers.

The contractor
manages the
cooking more
skilfully.

EXAMINATION of *Mr. Charles Mott*, Contractor for the Maintenance of the
Poor of *Lambeth*.

I HAVE for the last twelve years given my entire attention to the subject of the main-
tenance of the poor in workhouses.

Were you not connected with parochial management before that period?—No; I was brought up in a merchant's house (that of Baring, Mair & Co.), from which I entered into business on my own account. Whilst I was a shopkeeper, some rates were applied for which I thought exorbitant, which induced me to investigate the management of the parish; and in consequence of that investigation, the rates were greatly reduced. From what I then saw of the general parochial management, it occurred to me that I might serve myself whilst I served the public, by contracting for the management of the paupers, as well or better than they were then managed, and at a cheaper rate. I soon after availed myself of an opportunity of contracting for the maintenance of the poor of Newington parish, and also of the poor of the parish of Alverstoke, which comprehends the town of Gosport. I am now in the third year of my contract for the management of the poor of Lambeth. I have just now concluded a contract to maintain the poor of that parish, from the 25th of November, for three years to come.

I am the principal proprietor of the Peckham House Lunatic Asylum; and in that capacity I have transactions with about forty parishes.

At Gosport the average number of the in-door paupers is about 240; in Newington, they average about 270; in Lambeth, about 700. My contract for the maintenance of the poor of Lambeth is at 3s. 11d. per head—men, women and a few children,—able-bodied, decrepid, impotent,—all included.

This includes all the expense of the establishment, except rent and taxes. The parish agrees to keep every article in repair, except beds, bedding and clothing, which I find altogether; and I pay a per centage for the use of them, which about covers the current expenses. I did contract on the same terms for Newington; but I gave it up for Lambeth parish, the latter being much larger, and I having a lunatic asylum and other business to attend to. It was publicly stated a few days ago in Lambeth vestry, that the contract system had saved them 3,000*l.* per annum for their in-door poor, during the two years the contracts had been in operation. The gross sum paid to me during those two years was between 6,000*l.* and 7,000*l.* a year. In round numbers the saving may be stated as about one-third. The diet is generally precisely the same, and indeed better.

To what circumstances do you attribute this great difference between parochial management and contract management?—I should say principally to the different descriptions of food being given out in more exact proportions. A man who serves out food for the parish has no interest, or no sufficient interest, in distributing the food. However exactly the proportions may be prescribed, it will make very little difference to a parish officer whether or not he gives half an ounce more to each individual. Now in Lambeth workhouse, 700 half ounces, wasted three times a day, would make a very formidable difference. When I first took the Newington contract, I found the scales at the workhouse nearly an ounce deficient in the balance. This arose from an accumulation of filth in the scale appropriated for the weights; whilst the scale in which the provision was placed had been taken out and daily scoured, perhaps with brickdust. I found when I took the contract, that by this same process of scouring the scales at the Lambeth workhouse had been disturbed to the extent of about half an ounce. This made a difference of about 50*lbs.* of meat a week, or upwards of 300 stone weight in a year. I find it necessary to have the scales taken care of, and adjusted with nicety, annually, by a scale-maker, and daily by the parties using them. The person who had held the contract before me, at Newington, had ruined himself by it, though receiving 4s. 8d. per head. His ruin, I have no doubt, was occasioned by mismanagement, chiefly of the sort I have mentioned.

A contractor, for his own interest, will attend more closely to such points than any parish officers, however well-intentioned, can be expected to attend to the interests of others.

Another great point in favour of contract management is, that the contractor is unlimited in his markets, and that there is no favouritism or corruption on the part of tradesmen. It is notorious that there is great partiality in the parochial dealings; and officers have been known to supply goods in other names. It is also notorious, though difficult to substantiate the fact, that tradesmen give gratuities, per centages and allowances of some sort or other, to the officers whose duty it is to examine their goods and accounts. A contractor is not so much exposed to this loss as the parish. In saying this, I wish to guard myself against being supposed to refer, in the slightest degree, to the officers of Lambeth or Newington parishes; for I can bear testimony to the respectability of those officers, and the very correct manner in which the parish affairs are conducted: any faults that exist there are attributable entirely to the system, and not to the officers. Again: if proper persons are not appointed to manage the cooking (which they seldom are by parishes), great loss may be occasioned by improper cooking. In some parishes, for example, it is quite common to put all the joints, small and large, into the copper, and boil them the same length of time; the smaller joints are consequently boiled too much. With the quantity of meat used in Lambeth workhouse, there might be a difference of four or five stone in the consumption of meat for one day for that number of people. In receiving bread from bakers in a hot state, five per cent. is lost by the parish from the evaporation: for this reason parish bakers always send in their bread hot to the workhouse where they can. We bake our own bread, and bake it of a size to save time and loss from cutting up: we also adjust the quantities better, and prevent waste.

I remember

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I remember that at Deptford parish, some years ago, the parish officers having to make a Christmas pudding for 150 or 160 persons, the manager made upwards of a hundred weight more of pudding than was wanted for the number of people.

It is only by persons who have a direct personal interest, that the small savings, which make the difference between economical and extravagant management, will be carefully attended to. Unless the extravagance is very gross indeed, as in the last instance, annual parish officers cannot see it. In the first instance, the scales had been going for many years as I have described, without the source of loss having been dreamt of by the overseers.

You have stated that the poor of the Lambeth workhouse are now advocates for the supply and management of the workhouse by contract. Will you have the goodness to explain the causes of the popularity of the contract management?—In the first place, the poor people admit that their food is better. I have heard them say that their soup is much better—that their bread is better; in short, that their supply of provisions is generally much better. But the main cause is, perhaps, that they are more quickly and comfortably served with food than they were formerly, which is done with more skill and discipline. On the old system it was expected that the master should serve out the meat himself. I believe it formerly took two hours and a half, and sometimes three hours, each of the three meat-days in the week, to weigh and serve out the meat for dinner only. I may say also, I believe, that a large proportion of the meat was kept boiling whilst the one portion was being served out. It is unnecessary to specify the consequences of this to those who were the last served: the bell being rung at the commencement of the dinner, all the inmates struck work, and considered themselves free until the conclusion of the dinner; that would be a loss of labour, were their labour worth anything, and the people kept waiting in idleness and discontent. At Lambeth it requires two persons to cut, and four or five of the inmates as assistants. By the system which I have used, the dinners are served commonly within one hour. When the change took place, nothing could exceed the astonishment and gratification of the inmates on having their meals supplied so comfortably.

How do you account for the extreme unpopularity of contractors, or what are called the farmers of the house?—The complaints of the abuse of the contracting system are certainly too well founded; and it is undoubtedly liable to great abuse where character is not taken into account, and proper securities imposed. A contractor who is not properly chosen or made responsible, as he ought to be, will supply many of the articles very indifferently; he will give to the paupers money instead of other articles. Thus the people can do without butter, and the contractor having to supply butter, which, perhaps, would cost him 84s. per cwt., pays the poor perhaps at the rate of about 56s., getting thus about 50 per cent. In this way, too, the paupers frequently sell their meat, bread and other provisions.

How is the money thus obtained by the paupers spent?—Principally in gin and other liquors.

Which liquors are drunk in the house?—Yes. They are brought into the house by the nurses and other such people.

Then it is to be presumed that this system of purchasing food of the paupers is an inlet to other disorders in the management of the house?—Decidedly so, for the contractors must wink at it. Disturbances are thus bred in the house, independently of the dissatisfaction created in the better class of paupers. Then again, as the contractor, by his conduct, declares the food to be saleable, he cannot well hinder them selling it to others. Food is consequently sold to people out of the house, as well as amongst the paupers themselves; and much speculation and misery is necessarily occasioned. I may also mention another cause of the unpopularity of the contracting system, that when a contract is taken for the management of the workhouse, the liability of the parish to the tradesmen ceases. Tradesmen very frequently supply goods for consumption in the workhouse, from the belief that they are making the supply on the responsibility of the parishes. A contractor may be a man of straw as regards the tradespeople, and yet be bound in good sureties as regards the parish; for the sureties only undertake that he shall perform his contract, or make the requisite supply of goods to the parish; not that he shall pay for those goods to the tradespeople. The contractor, whose management of the scales I have mentioned, failed twice, and occasioned very considerable loss to the tradesmen during the time of his holding the contract. The parish did not lose a shilling. This same man has repeatedly since got other contracts for other parishes, which I can only account for from the ignorant eagerness of parishioners to snap at the lowest-priced contracts that can be offered, without regarding the consequences. This person now contracts at very low prices, the means of supplying which must be obvious to persons of experience.

Several parishes have tried contract management and abandoned it. Are you acquainted with any instances, or can you assign the general cause of the abandonment?—I do not know particular instances sufficiently well to speak about them; but I have no doubt that the failure arose from the parish not having given a remunerating price, or paid attention to the character of the contractor for integrity and ability. The fact is, these parishes have tried *bad* contract management, and having found that strict parochial management was *less bad*, they have immediately concluded that parochial management was *the best* possible. When the contract with my predecessor at Newington had closed in the manner I have stated, it would have been very natural to conclude that contract management had been properly tried, and that nothing was so good as the management of annual officers, or persons who gave no special attention to the subject.

P. L. (A.)—III.

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Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.CONTRACT
MANAGEMENT ON
A LARGE SCALE.Only by persons
who have a direct
interest that small
savings will be con-
stantly attended to.
Causes of the popu-
larity of the con-
tract management.Contract manage-
ment liable to
great abuse.Instances of mis-
management by
contractors.From comparison
with bad contract
management it is
concluded that
parish management
is the best possible.

Appendix (A.)

Reports,

E. Chadwick,
Esq.MANAGEMENT IN
LARGE DISTRICTS.Effect of size of
parishes on the
management.The rate at which
a small parish
could maintain its
poor in the same
manner as a large
one.The saving in the
large parish is in
the smaller cost of
superintendence.What would be the
effect of dividing
Lambeth into 96
independent
parishes.

Has the size of parishes any effect on the character of contractors?—I do not hesitate to say a very considerable effect. In the larger parishes, the management is not only much more economical but much more respectable, though still liable to great abuses. A very large proportion of the parishes are far too small to render it worth the while of any respectable contractor or capitalist to attend to them. I should say that it would not be worth while for any respectable person to give attention to a parish where the inmates were less than 200 in number. They cannot be attended to. A respectable person ought, I think, to get for his labour in the management of 200 or 300 persons (if he attends to them properly) as much as a parish must pay for the keep of 50 persons. A small parish must either pay largely for the keep of their small number of poor, or the poor must be badly managed and defrauded, and the small contractor will pay himself by malversation. In the large parish, where the contractor must by the Act of Parliament give proportional securities, that circumstance alone ensures very considerable responsibility. I am compelled to give sureties to the amount of 30,000*l.* to the parish officers of Lambeth. This again I may notice, as a circumstance which might operate mischievously by narrowing the competition; for I think a much smaller sum would be ample security to the parish, while it would enable a greater number of respectable men to supply the parish or compete for the contract. The smaller parishes are also more liable to intrigues between the contractor and the parish officers.

The average number of paupers in the workhouses throughout the country is, say 50 poor in each workhouse. Now, suppose that if instead of the 700 in-door poor of Lambeth parish being kept in one workhouse, they were kept in 14 distinct establishments, can you form an estimate of what would be the expense per head of the poor thus kept?—Would you wish to have an estimate inclusive or exclusive of the expense of superintendence?

It is to be presumed that in so large an establishment as that of Lambeth parish, superintendence is procured of a degree of ability much higher than that which is obtainable for 40*l.* per annum and board, or 60*l.* for a man and his wife—the average salary paid to the master of ordinary workhouses?—My experience has shown me that not only is much ability requisite for such management, but that the person having immediate superintendence of the details of the establishment should have an interest in its good management. For this reason I have taken the contract in conjunction with Mr. Drouet, a person of respectability—a remarkably active man, who resides in the house and devotes his whole time and attention to the management.

Let it be assumed in the estimate requested of you as to the comparative expense of large and small workhouses, that 40*l.* per annum is paid for the management of each establishment?—[*The Witness took time to consider this question, and has sent in the following answer in writing:*—]Supposing the poor to have precisely the same food, clothing, &c., in 14 small houses, 50 inmates in each, as they do in one large establishment containing 700 persons, it would make a difference, as near as I could calculate, of about 7*d.* or 8*d.* per head per week; that is to say, where the 700 would cost 3*s.* 11*d.* per head, the small houses would cost 4*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* 7*d.* per head. This, it must be obvious, would not be occasioned by the difference in the food, but principally from the saving in the superintendence and other details of management. The large establishment would not only make the difference of 7*d.* or 8*d.* per head in the cost of maintenance as compared with the small ones, but would leave also, if conducted to the best advantage, such a remuneration as would render it worth the attention of a clever active person to undertake the management. Some parishes have been misled by this difference, and from an erroneous opinion that small numbers can be maintained in the same ratio as a large number, have let their poor to some needy adventurer at a price at which it is impossible justice could have been done; and hence arises the objection to the system. If the character and the competency of contractors are not made the first consideration, I see nothing to prevent the contract system becoming ten times worse in its effects than the worst parish management. And here let me observe, that I am not here as an advocate of this or that system, but to speak to the facts within my own knowledge, and offer whatever opinion you may please to ask of me. The facts will speak for themselves. I beg also to add, that I consider myself in a great degree a disinterested witness, as I have now many engagements on my hand; and it is very improbable that I shall take any other contract after the expiration of the present Lambeth contract. On this account I shall not renew the Gosport contract, which I have held for the last ten years.

The city of London, within the walls, comprehends a population of 55,000, whose poor are relieved and managed in 96 parishes. Lambeth comprehends a population of 87,000, and the administration of relief to the poor is managed by one establishment, and the money raised for the purpose is collected on one rate. What do you consider would be the effect of the sub-division of Lambeth into 96 independent parishes, each managing the poor independently of the rest, or each exercising the right of assent or dissent from any combined management in the same way as each parish belonging to the incorporated hundreds?—The chief effects which appear to me to be likely to ensue are, that we should have ninety-six imperfect establishments instead of one; ninety-six sources of peculation instead of one; ninety-six sets of officers to be imposed upon by paupers instead of one set; ninety-six sources of litigation and of expense for removals and disputed settlements instead of one; and ninety-six modes of rating instead of one.

The witness referred to the returns of parochial expenditure, and stated, “It appears that the 96 city parishes, (many of which are extremely wealthy, and lightly burthened with poor,)

poor,) with a population of 55,000, expended for the relief of the poor, in the year 1831, 64,000*l.* Lambeth with 32,000 more people, and many densely-peopled districts containing very poor people, expended on the relief of the poor only 37,000*l.* during the same year. In the wealthy parishes of the city of London, the money paid as poor's-rates amounted to 1*l.* 3*s.* 3½*d.* per head; whilst in Lambeth the amount paid is 8*s.* 6*d.* and a fraction per head. I believe that the individuals relieved are much more numerous in Lambeth than in the city of London. They were so formerly, and I believe they are so now. The adults of Lambeth parish are now supported in the workhouse at 3*s.* 11*d.* per head; whilst in the city of London, the greater proportion of all classes of poor, including children, are farmed out at an expense of from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* each, whilst the expense of those maintained in the small city workhouses varies from 5*s.* to 8*s.* per head per week for all classes."

Do you think this statement gives a fair view of the merits of management in small as compared with large town parishes?—It never occurred to me to make any comparison of this kind until it was suggested by the question; but my impression is that it does afford a fair comparison. The management of the poor in incorporated hundreds is undoubtedly superior to the management by independent parishes; but still the good of the hundred management is much diminished by the numerous sets of officers, and quarrels and conflicting interests of the separate parishes.

It has been suggested that, for the purposes of classification, the present workhouses of a town might be brought under a central management—that in a town in which there are at present five or six workhouses, each of these workhouses might be appropriated to the reception and treatment of one class of paupers; that one house might be made to contain all children, another all the able-bodied females, another all the able-bodied males, and so on. Now do you think that a system of combined management of the paupers in these distinct houses might be conducted in such a manner as to reduce the total expenditure for the maintenance of the paupers of that town?—With respect to superintendence, there would be some additional expense; but that would, I think, be more than counterbalanced by the increased number of the poor maintained. The bread, for instance, might be supplied from one common bakehouse. This of itself would be a considerable saving. In small establishments you generally lose more than you gain by baking in the house, as you cannot get it done by the paupers without great waste, and the consumption is not enough to make it worth while to employ a regular journeyman baker. In Newington, the consumption of bread was not enough to keep a baker employed; whilst at Lambeth, by baking fourteen or fifteen sacks a week, we have ample employment for one journeyman and assistants in the house. The greater part of the other food could be supplied from one common kitchen, and conveyed to the houses hot. In most workhouses there are persons who, though they cannot be trusted with the management of any thing themselves, may be usefully employed under an intelligent superintendent. In fact, I see no more difficulty in managing so many establishments in a town than there is in managing five or six wards of one house. Indeed, I believe the trouble of management would be greatly reduced by means of the classification, which would be of great value, by enabling you to put the refractory by themselves. It is a very few of these who occasion the constant necessity of the presence of a superintendent. I think that, if Mr. Drouet had the means of locking up or separating in any way about half a dozen refractory males, or as many females, in Lambeth workhouse, who are always ready to throw the whole establishment into a state of confusion, he might leave the place with the greatest security, to attend to other departments, where there was any thing going on to require the attendance of a director.

We find from the returns of a number of the workhouses sent to us, that in very few is there any distinction made between the rations for children and for adults, or between males and females. Would such a combined system as that alluded to enable you to make a better adaptation of dietaries?—Most certainly, and that without exciting the jealousies which are created by different scales of diet being served in one house, where the different classes run a good deal one into another. There might be more economy in the diet of children, and of the poor in general, whilst the old and infirm and proper objects might be indulged with some comforts, without exciting dissatisfaction amongst others. It is for the sake of peace, as well as saving trouble, that the dietaries of parish workhouses are generally uniform. Many parish officers would prescribe a more appropriate diet for the idle and the vicious, if they did not see that they would thereby make deserving objects suffer.

You are then of opinion, that the management of a combination of workhouses may be as economical as the management of the same number of paupers in one workhouse?—Yes, and rather more so on an extended scale; because I find that the cost of maintenance decreases as the numbers increase. With reference to the Lambeth workhouse, I have calculated that one thousand persons might be maintained at 300*l.* per annum less than seven hundred persons; and by the same rule, two thousand persons, in two different houses, one thousand persons in each, might be maintained for 1,000*l.* per annum less than one thousand persons in two houses of five hundred each. In fact, the saving may be estimated at 1*l.* per head per annum. If I were competing for a contract, I would on these data take a reduced sum in proportion to the number; judging from own experience at Newington and Lambeth, I should say that one active individual, sufficiently interested, might superintend the establishments for two thousand persons.

If such a system of combined management were established, do you think that local authorities or visitors might be intrusted with the power of modifying the dietaries?—I am decidedly of opinion that no such authority can be beneficially exercised, even by the local manager and superintendent of any place; whatever deviation there is in the way of local discretion will probably be extra beneficial.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

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LARGE DISTRICTS.

All deviations lead
to abuse.

extra indulgence has a tendency to extend and perpetuate itself which cannot be resisted. If you give to particular people an extra allowance on special grounds, all the rest will exclaim, "Why should not we have it as well as they?" and too often they get it. That which was only intended to be the comfort of the few, and as an exception, at last, one by one being added to the list, becomes the general rule; and when once established, there are few annual officers who will interfere to abridge the accustomed allowance, or get themselves stigmatized as "oppressors of the poor." I may mention as an instance, that about two years ago, Mr. Randal Jackson, one of the county magistrates, visited Lambeth workhouse, and humanely distributed some small parcels of tea to several of the old inmates; and at the same time suggested the propriety of allowing to several of the old and deserving inmates a trifle per week for such comforts (tea and sugar). I remonstrated with some of the officers against the adoption of this proposal, as I well knew from experience that it had a dangerous tendency. The answer was, that they could not do otherwise than fall in with the suggestion of such a person. They have ever since allowed ninety-five old inmates 6d. each per week in addition to their allowance of food. Now the very worthy and humane individual, when he recommended an allowance to "a few" old persons, could not have thought of the extent of the alteration (apparently so trifling and unworthy of consideration), or he would have seen that it would amount to between one and two hundred pounds per annum, a charge that would be perpetuated on the parish, and would, to sustain it, have required an endowment of nearly 4,000*l.*, had the benevolent individual said, "If the parish do not do this, I will." In this way alterations in detail, which appear trifling, make in the aggregate very large sums. Humane individuals rarely calculate upon the tendency or aggregate effect of such alterations; the extension of this indulgence is at present checked by the contract management, but had the workhouse been under the old management, the probability is that the indulgence would have been extended to the greater proportion of the inmates. In the way exhibited in this instance such alterations are made without exciting any inquiry; while if a new school had been to be established, requiring between one and two hundred pounds per annum from the parochial revenue for its maintenance, the whole parish would have been agitated to consider the propriety of it.

No person can be more desirous than I am to make a distinction between respectable poverty and lazy, worthless pauperism; but I have always thought that the means of doing this should spring from a source quite unconnected with the poor rate; from benevolent gifts or voluntary contribution, rather than from a *compulsory rate*, which is distributed indiscriminately to the worthless and deserving, unmindful of either strength or decrepitude, age or character.

Have you not found that one cause of pauperism is occasional sickness, which compels independent labourers to come into the workhouse during the continuance of that sickness, and thus introduces them and their families, for the first time, to parochial relief?—This is a very great cause, the existence of which I have long regretted; for the comforts received during their sickness, and the general mode of living which they observe in the workhouse, are such as to induce them to remain a long time, and offer very strong temptations to them to throw themselves upon the parish entirely on the first opportunity, of which they are sure to avail themselves. I have long considered it would be desirable to procure separate establishments for the treatment of the poor who fall sick.*

By a combination
of workhouses
better provision
would be made
for the sick.

Has it ever occurred to you, that by means of a central administration of the parochial funds of a town, and a combination of workhouses, such as that mentioned, one of the existing houses might be appropriated exclusively to the reception of the sick?—In the central government of the poor of a district such a provision would certainly enter into the plan; but although it has never occurred to me, yet it would be obviously of great advantage. Whilst very good provision is made in our parish, and perhaps in other larger parishes, for the treatment of the sick poor, in the small country workhouses the treatment of the sick is commonly very wretched, as they have no constant attendance, and in every emergency the doctor must be sent for, frequently at two or three miles' distance. It is also common, that in consequence of the great distance, the doctor prescribes and sends medicines on the report of the messenger, and without seeing the patient. If one house were appropriated in the manner stated for the sick of a district, and a portion of each separate expenditure were collected together and systematically applied, a hospital for the poor might be maintained without any additional expense. And whilst the sick would be better treated, without being tempted to remain paupers, all the advantages of a medical school would be derived for the district.

From the statements of medical men in the metropolis, and also of such persons as Dr. Kay of Manchester, it appears, that in consequence of the want of drainage of certain districts, and the crowded and dirty state of the habitations, there are some neighbourhoods from which disease is never absent—Have you observed similar effects in the parishes with which you are acquainted?—I have observed it, not only in Lambeth, but in all crowded neighbourhoods;

* Mr. Lee, the master of St. Pancras workhouse, states, "We have on an average about 150 patients in our hospital and in the workhouse. A large proportion of these are independent poor. When the independent poor come into the workhouse and see how well the paupers live, it is very difficult to get them out of it. For this reason I have always thought our hospital, though maintained with the best motives, produces very bad effects. The larger proportion of our paupers are hereditary paupers; the hospital affords an inlet from the dependent paupers. It would be very beneficial if the hospital were a separate establishment."

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neighbourhoods; and, seeing how large a source of unavoidable pauperism this is, I have long regretted that the proprietors of these small houses were not compelled to keep them in a proper state. An independent labourer may be industrious and provident, and yet both he and his family may be subjected to a fever or other disease, and thrown upon the parish, in consequence of want of drainage and filth, and other causes, which he has no means of removing.

So that, looking merely to the poor-rates, it would be good economy to pay attention to drainage and the enforcement of sanitary regulation?—I think so; and that it would be attended with great benefit. Some neighbourhoods are so constantly the seats of particular diseases, and sources of pauperism from that cause, that if assistant-overseers, and others, accustomed to visit the abodes of the poor, were asked for cases of those diseases, they could direct you to particular places where you would almost be sure to find the disease at work. I remember that one winter, when the weather was very severe, the beadles of Newington parish were directed to pay particular attention to the sick out-door poor. They went at once to some courts in Kent-street, as a matter of course, without making any inquiry (just as a game-keeper would go to a well-stocked preserve); and returned with two coach-loads full of most deplorable objects, the victims of frightful disease.

What has been your experience on the subject of the employment of the poor in the workhouse?—The great difficulty, as it appears to me, is the obtainment of employment for the paupers which does not interfere with the regular labour of people out of doors. I have had two manufactories: I have had, perhaps, a dozen looms at work at a time; and I used to manufacture all the sheeting and linen and cotton goods required for the consumption of the workhouse. But I found manufacturing in the workhouse objectionable on several grounds. In the first place, with regard to returns, you can rarely get any thing to pay the expenses, because, with paupers, you cannot enforce from them that regularity (although you give them a proportion of the price of the work) and attention to small savings which a manufacturer can enforce from paid workmen. These small savings make the profit of the manufacturer. Then machinery has made such progress, that unless the workhouse was formed into one immense manufactory, I do not believe, that if the raw material were given to the parish, any return could be obtained for pauper labour. Both with the adults and the children, there is great loss in teaching them the trade. Besides this, you must get a paid superintendent; for I never knew a pauper who, even if he were well acquainted with any branch of manufacture, could be depended on as superintendent of a department. If you educate the children to a trade or manufacture conducted by a parish, you give the contractor, or the workhouse-keeper even, a motive to keep them upon the parish, or not to put them to independent occupations. Being thus kept in the workhouse, they contract various bad habits. If they are kept until they become adults, they are too old to submit to the drudgery of apprenticeships, and can very seldom get employment, as they are mostly unfitted for any. When I had the Newington contract, I found there two lads, upwards of 17 years of age each. They had both been found expert weavers for the workhouse, and had been kept in by the former contractor. The overseer proposed that they should be ejected. I pointed out the improbability of their being able to get into any employment; for it was notorious that no manufacturers would employ them, on account of their not having served a regular apprenticeship. The overseers, however, insisted on their being sent out of the house. One of them, named Porter, died in about a month, not having obtained a day's employment, after having lived in very great misery. The other, named Giles East, got little or no employment; and in less than three months committed an offence for which he was executed. The parties who had expelled him from the house were called upon to prosecute him for the offence. All these consequences I consider to be the results of the system, though the incidents were more strikingly marked in those cases than in others.

Employment of
the paupers in
workhouses.

Have you retained no descriptions of labour in your establishments?—We have retained several descriptions; for the women, coarse needle-work, cotton-winding for the tallow-chandlers, sorting hairs for the brushmakers; for the men, door-mat making, knotting yarns for spun-yarn and cord for the bottoms of mats, coarse kinds of twines, picking oakum. These are descriptions of employment that may with little difficulty be obtained, without affecting to any extent the labour of the inhabitants.

Even in these employments, however,* we are subject to continual losses from mismanagement or depredation. One man we lately prosecuted at the sessions for stealing fifty-one shirts, which he was entrusted to take home, and he was sentenced to seven years' transportation, which, by the way, I may observe, was a promotion to a place where he would obtain more food, if not more comfort, than in the workhouse.

Effect in the work-
houses of the want
of good secondary
punishment.

Are you sure of that?—I am sure, from conversations which I have had on the subject with the superintendent of convicts, that the convict receives more bread a-day than the pauper. Indeed, it is notorious at Gosport, where I have heard it descanted upon by many of the inhabitants, that the convicts receive one ounce of meat per day more than the soldiers set to guard them. I heard at Gosport, that the convicts being told to do something which they did not like, one of them exclaimed, in the presence of the military guard, "What next, I wonder! d—n it, we shall soon be as bad off as soldiers." An anecdote is told of a conversation that passed between a convict and a soldier, on their comparative comforts and probability of changing places, when the convict wanted 25*l.* to swap or change situations with the soldier. The convicts ridicule the soldiers; and I have myself seen

* Sempstresses, &c.

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seen a convict hold up some food to the guard, saying, "Soldier, will you have a bit?" Yet the operation of this system in gaols and workhouses was pointed out years ago, and it still continues.

About three years ago a butcher at Gosport, of the name of Weavill, who contracts for the supply of meat, applied to Mr. Drouet, requesting him to take about 3 cwt. of meat, with which he was, as he termed it, "hung up;" that is, he had it on his hands on the Saturday night, and he had no chance of disposing of it. He explained that, although it was exceedingly good meat, it had been rejected by the convicts on board the *Leviathan* convict ship. It appeared that the convicts have a committee for the inspection of their provisions, and that this committee had rejected the meat. I have also learned that if this committee rejects any provisions, the officers of the hulks dare not insist on their being received. Mr. Drouet went to see the meat, which he found to be perfectly unexceptionable in quality; but fearing that there would be some imputation if he purchased it, he refused to receive it unless it was sanctioned by the parochial officers. The parish officers went to view it, and they declared that it was as good meat as they wished to eat themselves, and it was accordingly eaten by the inmates of the workhouse.

It is well known as the result of the power of rejecting provisions exercised by servants, that tradesmen are compelled to come to an understanding with them; is there no reason to suppose that the convicts' committee would turn their power to account in the same way?—That is certainly the natural conclusion, though no facts of the kind have come to my knowledge; there is, I apprehend, no reason to suppose that convicts would be less scrupulous than servants; but some of the convicts are more than servants: it is a notorious, and I must say, a flagitious thing that convicts are now employed as foremen of honest and independent labourers in the dock-yards. I have heard of indignant complaints of those labourers at being ordered about by convicts with irons on their legs.* The convict's labour is proportionably slight.

Do you find this state of things, as to punishment, re-act upon the workhouse?—Decidedly so; and most mischievously as to discipline and management. The paupers are well aware that there is, in fact, no punishment for them, and do not consider a commitment to prison any disgrace. Application was lately made by an elderly female to Mr. Drouet for a servant; a strong healthy girl was sent to her, and the old lady approved of her, but feared (being lame and confined a good deal to her room on the second floor) that the running up and down stairs would fatigue her. "Oh!" said the girl, "I don't mind that; I have been to the treadmill for six months, so that I am accustomed to going up stairs." From the conversation I have had with convicts, it is clear, that confinement in a prison, or even transportation to the hulks, is not much dreaded. "We are better fed," I have heard them say, "have better clothes, and more comfortable lodging, than we could obtain from our labour;" and the greatest, in fact almost only, punishment they appear to dread, is being deprived of female intercourse. Some months since, three young women (well-known prostitutes) applied for relief at Lambeth workhouse; and, upon being refused, two of them immediately broke the windows. On the moment, the *three* were given into custody to the police; but recollecting that only *two* were guilty of breaking the windows, the beadle was sent to state the fact, and request from the overseer, that the innocent person might be discharged: she, however, declared that she would not be separated from her companions, and immediately returned to the house and demolished two or three more windows to accomplish her desire. The late chairman of the Middlesex Quarter Sessions related a circumstance which strongly proves how far confinement in gaol is considered a punishment. An old Irishwoman, having had sentence of *three* months' imprisonment passed upon her for some petty theft, dropped a curtesy, with "*Plase your Honour, can't you make it for six months?*"

I will merely observe further, that a contractor is worse off, as to the maintenance of order, than other persons; the jealousy with which he is viewed, and the credit given to all the statements of paupers, preventing him from using the little power which he has. It is, however, necessary that some ready and efficient punishment should be available to whomsoever is intrusted the application of pauper labour.

One failure of paupers' employment is the want of control over the labour of the roads by the parish officers.

It has been stated to us, that in St. Paul's, Covent Garden, the paupers have been usefully employed in cleansing the streets more frequently than would be done by the contractor. Do you not think that much labour of that sort might be found for the paupers?—The mischief is, that the superintendence of the paupers and the application of their labour, and the management of the roads, are usually under district trusts. In most cases the surveyors do not like to be troubled with paupers. Arrangements might, I think, be made to render the greater proportion of the road-labour available for the purpose of employing the poor. But this could only be by a union of management of large districts, in which there would always be a large stock of pauper labour available, and in which there could be skilful management.

Have

* Mr. G. B. Chambers, churchwarden, Isle of Sheppy, says in his answers to the queries issued by the Commissioners:—"Although unconnected with the questions sent me, I beg to call the attention of the Commissioners to the cruel system of allowing the convicts to perform the labour in the dock-yards. We have at present 80 men unemployed, degraded in spirit, and a nuisance to the neighbourhood; the majority of whom would obtain employment but for the convicts. Were the Commissioners to see the gangs of half-starved, and nearly naked, paupers working on the roads, and view the contrast in the well fed, well clothed felons, they would excuse my calling their attention to the subject, and with me, execrate a system so demoralizing and unjust."

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LARGE DISTRICTS
UNDER CENTRAL
CONTROL.

Have you not observed, that in the smaller agricultural parishes, one main difficulty in the way of the employment of the paupers is the want of permanent superintendents of adequate skill to direct their labours?—Yes, and the cause is obvious, in the want of sufficient extent of the parish to pay a competent person, and the want of a sufficient amount of disposable labour to make it worth while to employ such a person, even if the parish could afford it.

A second cause of the idleness of paupers in the smaller parishes, is stated to be the division of authority amongst overseers; how have you found this operate?—I have seldom observed the overseers agree about the employment of the paupers in any one new mode, even if the surveyors of the roads could be got to agree with the overseers. The want, on the part of the overseers, of an adequate pecuniary interest in the success of the management might, I think, be placed as the first cause of the want of success in the employment of labourers in most of the smaller parishes; the next is the want of capital for the purpose. I have the means of knowing the pecuniary condition of a number of parishes, and I know few instances in which they are not constantly in debt.

Want of pecuniary interest on the part of overseers in the excess of pauper labour in small parishes.

Do you find that the expenditure of parochial rates is watched by the rate-payers with jealousy, as an expenditure of their own money would be?—Certainly not. In some parishes individuals have made much noise, and thrown suspicions upon the motives of officers; but the characters and pretensions of some of these parish champions are so very equivocal, that their endeavours are seldom sanctioned by the respectable part of the parishioners.

Expenditure of the rates not watched by parishioners generally as an expenditure of their own money.

Do peculations of the parish money excite a sensation similar to that excited by the peculation of private monies?—No; I know an instance within the last week of an application for the collectorship of parish rates by a man who was formerly dismissed from a similar situation in the same parish as a defaulter. And I well recollect an anecdote of a circumstance that occurred many years ago I believe at Shadwell or Ratcliffe. Two overseers, in collecting the rates, called upon a man with whom they had a strong dispute respecting some rates due by him. The overseers quitted the shop in a passion, forgetting their two bags containing the day's collection. The man instantly dropped the bags into the water-but in the yard, and resumed his station in the shop. The overseers returned, but the man denied all knowledge of the money. A search-warrant was obtained, but nothing could be found; and after the affair had blown over, he purchased two horses with the money for the purposes of his business, named them after the two overseers; and they were a long time about the parish, a source of laughter to the parishioners of the folly of the overseers, and the shopkeeper's ingenuity.

Instance of the laxity of the popular feeling on the subject.

Is it not notorious that a portion of the out-door relief is money given in payment of the rents of the landlords of small tenements, who serve parish offices from year to year more frequently than any other class of persons?—Certainly it has become almost a matter of course. A striking exemplification of the system occurred recently at Lambeth. Mr. Gregory, one of the late parish officers, complained that one of his tenants had for a considerable time past been paid her allowance in copper in five shilling papers, on opening which she had found them every one a penny less than the proper amount. He produced a pile of the papers in which the copper had been enclosed; some of these papers had marks upon them, from which he imagined that the officers might trace from whence they had received them. I asked him whether it was not probable that the woman had not abstracted the penny herself. "No," said he, "I can depend upon her honesty. After leaving here, I am sure she never goes any where, but brings the money directly from the board to me." I recommended him to state his case to the board, which I believe he did with unconscious gravity.

Continuous service of landlords of small tenements as annual officers.

I have observed that the suggestion of the administration of out-door relief in kind generally meets with some warm opponent amongst the officers who serve from year to year. Do you think we should be justified in ascribing the opposition to such relief, or to the discontinuance of out-door relief, and to interference with the self-management of parishes to such interests?—The extensive existence of such interests is undoubtedly notorious, and of course they influence the judgment. If it is admitted that it is the interest of the landlords of small houses to obtain money relief for their tenants, it would be giving the landlords credit for more than their neighbours' share of honesty not to suppose they take advantage of it.

Motives for opposition to interference with self-management.

Do you think that the evils of the present system are in a process of correction?—In the larger parishes, where there is a more respectable and intelligent superintendence, there has lately been some check to the increase of allowances and temptations; but I believe that in the great majority of the parishes the evils of the system go on increasing.

Have you observed the operation of the advantage given to paupers over independent labourers?—It is too notorious. When the working men who have never been in the habit of obtaining parochial relief, get into the workhouse by any accident, they are only to be got out with the greatest difficulty: the parish officers are forced to bribe them out. The workmen say they cannot go out unless certain sums are given them "to set them up." Scarcely a week passes in which three or four bargains of this sort are not made; but after having seen what sort of a place they have to fall back upon, they commonly spend the money and return in a few days. A family, consisting of an agricultural labourer, his wife, and six children, some time since came into the Newington workhouse from Norfolk. Before they were classed with the other paupers, they were allowed to dine by themselves. When the regular rations were served out to them, they were all in astonishment at the quantity: the man had never before been in a workhouse, and he especially was amazed: when the food was first taken in, he asked the person who served it how much of it was intended

Advantages of paupers over independent labourers.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

CAUSES OF
PAUPERISM.

intended for them? and was lost in astonishment when he found that they were allowed the whole of it. He declared that he had more meat to divide amongst his family in one day, now they were paupers, than he had been able to obtain for them during several months, when he was an independent labourer: and he repeated afterwards, that during the whole of his life he had never lived so well as he lived in the workhouse. It is unnecessary to observe that we had the greatest difficulty in getting this family out of the workhouse. Girls who are sent out from the workhouse to situations commonly quarrel with their employers, and throw themselves out of place, on the ground that they are worked harder than in the workhouse, and are not kept so well, though they are, as well as their employers, in the middle ranks of life, and are required to work no harder than many of the wives of industrious tradesmen. On Christmas-day, when the customary allowance, consisting of seven ounces of cooked roast-beef, clear of bone, one pound of potatoes, one pound of plum-pudding, and a pint of strong beer, exclusive of their bread and other daily allowances, was served out at Lambeth workhouse, one of the collectors happened to be present, and he remarked on the goodness of the quality as well as on the quantity of the provisions. I asked him whether there were not a great many persons, from whom he collected this rate, who were not able to procure such a dinner for their families? His reply was—"Hundreds."

What proportion of those who partook of this superior fare you have mentioned, do you consider deserving objects?—If by deserving objects is meant those who have not been reduced to want by idleness, improvidence or vice, but by unavoidable circumstances, I should say, certainly not one-fifth. Some few years back I endeavoured to trace the causes of the paupers becoming chargeable, and I found that in nine cases out of ten, the main cause was an ungovernable inclination for fermented liquors.

Investigation of the
causes of pauperism
in 300 cases.

Over how many cases did your inquiries extend?—I was then the contractor for Newington workhouse; the number of the cases I took was upwards of 300. The inquiry was conducted for some months, as I investigated every new case that came under my knowledge. All my subsequent observations have strengthened the conclusions from these cases.

Not one in twenty
from failure of
employment.

What proportion of these cases arose from failure of employment?—Not one in twenty.

In the course of that investigation, did you trace any effects as resulting from the absence of education?—As to moral or religious instruction, I observed a very marked and lamentable deficiency; for, out of 300, there were, I think, two professing the Catholic faith, about twenty Methodists, and, with the exception of about fifteen idiots or persons of imbecile mind, the rest, though they professed to be orthodox, yet might be termed "anything-arians." They had the liberty of attending divine service, or of going out to any other place of worship; but I found that the majority of them who availed themselves of this privilege never went to any place of worship, but followed vagrant habits. Those who have had education I have always found more easily manageable; and, certainly, the most desperate characters have been the most completely uninstructed. No one can feel more strongly than I do the utility, the absolute necessity, of a general education; but it must be of a better description than that now commonly given before it can have the desired effect. It is forgotten that reading and writing are not of themselves knowledge, and will not of themselves make a man moral. Amongst the number of persons whose cases I investigated were several of an education far above the average; and I had one person under my care named William Jones, who was the cousin of an eminent barrister and the son of a clergyman. This person was very learned, and for the purpose of keeping up his knowledge of the languages with which he was conversant, he used to keep a journal of each day's transactions, and the account of each day was kept in one of the seven different languages with which he was the most familiar. He was sent to my charge at the workhouse as a victim to the habit of drinking. His journal contained very accurate accounts of his own aberrations; and yet, notwithstanding the calamitous consequences which he himself noted and commented upon justly, he could not refrain from indulgence. On one occasion, after he had been for some time debarred from liquor, he, by some means or other, got some drink, but he was nevertheless sober and capable of reasoning collectedly, when he came to me and begged permission to be allowed to go out of the workhouse, for he said he could not bear abstinence any longer. I told him I could not make the house a prison, and that if he, when sober, went out, I would not receive him back again. He still besought me, and I gave him half an hour to consider of it. At the end of the time he came again, and finding me still adhering to my resolution, said he was extremely sorry, for he must go; he could not resist having some more liquor, "if it was to secure him a crown of glory." I was obliged to allow him to go; and in the middle of the next day he was brought back in a state of beastly intoxication, and nearly naked; his clothes having been disposed of to obtain the means of indulging his propensity. I refused to pay the coachman or receive him again. I afterwards learned that the coachman, after having driven him about to respectable persons, his family connexions, to obtain payment, drove him to Union Hall, where the magistrates committed him to Kingston house of correction. Since then I have not seen him. Such instances among educated people are not common.

Do you think that any thing may be done in the way of education for the present mass of adults of the working classes?—It is not possible to say what *might* be done; but I have not seen any system of direct education from which I could anticipate any material benefits as regards the adults. No time, however, should be lost with children.

Mischievous facilities to drink
afforded by the
pawnbrokers.

But although nothing could be expected from any influence of education upon adults, have you not observed circumstances mischievously influencing their habits which may be removed or altered?—Yes; I am glad to have an opportunity of stating, that I have observed such

such circumstances, and have often regretted the extreme facility with which the means of gratifying the propensities to drink and other indulgencies are afforded by the system on which the pawnbroker's business is at present carried on. In the course of my experience and investigations, I have had many thousands of duplicates of articles pledged by the poor; and I have found that nearly all the articles pledged by these classes are at sums from 3*d.* to 1*s.*, and not exceeding 1*s.* 6*d.* each pledge. The celebrated Billy Clarke, of gambling and sporting notoriety, died lately in Lambeth workhouse, leaving 35 pawnbrokers' duplicates, 27 of which were for sums under 1*s.* each. It is notorious to those acquainted with the habits of the people, and it is indeed admitted by the paupers themselves, that nine out of ten of them are pledged for liquor. The immense proportion of these pawnings were by women, and chiefly of articles usually deemed essential to their use or comfort, such as handkerchiefs, flannel-petticoats, shifts, or household articles, such as tea-kettles, flat-irons, and such things; these articles being always in requisition, they are usually redeemed in a few days, and very frequently the same day. I made a calculation of the interest paid by them for their trifling loans, and found it to be as follows:—

A loan of 3*d.* if redeemed same day, pays int. at rate of 5,200 per ct.; if weekly 866 per ct.

4 <i>d.</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,900	-	-	650
6 <i>d.</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,600	-	-	433
9 <i>d.</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,733	-	-	288
1 <i>s.</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,300	-	-	216

What is the remedy you proposed for this system?—An enactment that no pawnbroker should be allowed to advance a less sum on any article than 2*s.* 6*d.* From some conversation which I have had with one very respectable pawnbroker, I am led to believe that the most respectable of that body would not object to such an alteration. It is to be observed, that the Pawnbroker's Act allows them to charge the same interest, namely, 20 per cent. on a loan of 3*d.* on a pledge for a day as it does upon the loan of 2*s.* 6*d.* for a month: I think it probable that the legislature never conceived that any pledges would be made for less sums than 2*s.* 6*d.* The facility of obtaining the means of indulgence is also a facility for disposing of the produce of petty thefts, and a temptation to them. After a general examination of the pauper's clothing account, finding a large proportion of the articles missing, I have next seized all the duplicates we could find on their persons or in their boxes, and on sending round to the pawnbrokers we were sure to find a great proportion of the missing articles. Here, it may be observed, there was no real want. I might have added, as one of the advantages of contract management, that the contractor is necessarily compelled to take greater care of the stock in the house, which, under other management, is inevitably plundered extensively.

Have you observed any bad effects produced by facilities given to contract debts, operating on the improvident habits of the poor?—Yes, very bad effects indeed, and this is one point on which I am glad to have an opportunity of speaking. I am well informed, that credit is given to poor people, on the knowledge on the part of the creditors, that they have a sort of security on the parish rates. They know that when the head of a family appears likely to be thrown into prison on the judgment of one of the small debt courts, the wife and family immediately apply to the parish for relief, and the parish officers too often assist in paying the debt in order to get rid of the burthen of the wife and family. I can hardly trust myself to express my feelings with relation to what I have heard, and the instances I know of the oppression and cruelty practised by these small courts, where the judges are frequently small shopkeepers directly interested in the decisions.*

Have you thought of any remedy for these abuses?—I have thought that, at all events, a limitation of the powers of such courts to distrain on the goods of the debtor where he had any, would prevent credit being given to the mischievous extent to which it is now given to persons who have no self-control and no means of paying the debts they contract. The suppression of the power given to these petty courts to imprison the person, would be one of the greatest boons that could be conferred on the labouring classes, and would at the same time afford very great relief to the parishes.

Do you think the remedy might go any farther with advantage; or that there would be no bad effects from depriving the creditor of his remedy where there are not goods?—I certainly consider that the remedy might be carried farther. I think that the effect would be, to prevent credit being given to the thoughtless and improvident, whilst the honest and industrious man would receive all the accommodation upon honour that he has before been in the habit of receiving or could require. The tally-shops and the chandler's-shops in districts which furnish a large proportion of the business of these courts, have had a most mischievous effect in fostering habits of improvidence amongst the labouring classes.†

Have

* The fees of these courts are flagitiously high in proportion to the debts.

† On referring to some Parliamentary Returns of the number of prisoners committed to Whitecross-street and Horsemonger-lane prisons, on process out of the Courts of Request, it appears that, in the year 1829, there were 932 prisoners committed to the latter gaol, and confined during periods from 1 to 100 days; that the aggregate amount of debts for which these 932 prisoners were confined, was 1,900*l.*, and the aggregate costs 574*l.*; that, during the same year, 1,563 persons were confined in Whitecross-street prison during similar periods, and that the total amount of their debts was 2,071*l.*, of the costs, 746*l.* The return from this prison states that "there are, upon an average, about 75 prisoners on process out of the Courts of Request constantly in the above prison; and their food, firing, bedding, medicine, &c., are estimated to cost annually 422*l.* 14*s.* 4*d.*

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

Savings Banks.

Have you formed any opinion as to the expediency of increasing or maintaining the duties on fermented liquors, as a means of abating their consumption?—I have not considered that subject, and I do not, therefore, feel myself competent to express any opinion upon it.

Have you considered what is to be done in giving additional facilities for the formation of frugal habits by the improvement of Friendly Societies and Savings Banks?—They are inestimable institutions, which it appears to me, are susceptible of great improvements. I have no doubt that if the inducements to improvidence were removed by the reform of the present system of poor law management, they would be immensely resorted to. Something should certainly be done to give additional securities to benefit societies. It was only on Friday last, a person in middling circumstances stated to me, that a benefit society to which he had contributed for some years, to the amount of upwards of 120*l.*, had been broken up from bad management, and that his proportion of the fund, when distributed, only amounted to 3*l.* He was thus deprived of the saving which was probably his only resource against pauperism. It would be a very great advantage and inducement to save, if annuities, adapted to the circumstances of the labouring classes, were provided with government security. But the legislation on these subjects has hitherto been peculiarly blundering and unfortunate, and if there is any further interference, it should certainly be with greater caution, and by persons of superior knowledge and abilities.

Bastardy law, its
operation.

Have you observed the operation of the law relating to bastardy?—Yes, and I have heard much of it from others. I have considered it a great oversight in the law to allow the oath of any strumpet, however abandoned, to affiliate a child upon a man, however respectable, whose oath in denial cannot be received, and who can but seldom obtain evidence to negative the charge. There is no question, I think, that many respectable men have been fixed upon by loose characters, in order to obtain a better maintenance for their children. I well recollect a young woman at Newington, upon being asked by the committee who the father of her child was, hesitated for some time, and having been told that the magistrates would compel her to swear to the father; she replied, "She should make one of them (the committee) look very foolish, if she did." Mr. Rossiter, one of the churchwardens of Lambeth, told me, that when he was overseer, a young woman applied to have an order made upon a gentleman, as the father of her child, whom he (Mr. R.) had reason to believe was not the father, and he told her he did not believe her, and asked her how she could think of charging that gentleman as the father of her child; "because," said she, "I choose that he shall be the father of my child."—Mr. Tobias Brown, an eminent surgeon at Camberwell, related to me the case of a respectable young man, I think, from Essex, who had been sworn to by a young woman as the father of her child; he had no means of disproving it but by submitting to an examination by medical gentlemen, when his utter impotency was proved beyond doubt; but the woman went unpunished.—On 5th September 1832, a young woman named Elizabeth Cleave, on being taken before the magistrates to affiliate her child, positively swore to a person named Baker, as the father. It turned out that Baker had been drowned on board the *Brilliant* pleasure boat; and as she could neither tell whether he was dark or fair, short or tall, it was considered she had sworn falsely; she was sent back to Lambeth workhouse, and having been frequently questioned by Mr. Drouet, she at length admitted that she had sworn falsely; that she did not even know Baker; but that she had done it to screen the real father, who was a Clapham coachman.

Applications are constantly made at workhouses for *wet nurses*, and in cases of emergency character is not inquired into; it therefore not unfrequently happens, that a young woman of indifferent character, who has never been able to procure above 6*l.* or 7*l.* per year wages, is hired into a respectable family as wet-nurse, at 35 or 40 guineas for nine months; her own child being provided for by the putative father, through the parish. It must be recollected that perjury is encouraged by the reluctance of many respectable married men to meet such a charge; they would sooner secretly submit to an imposition, however gross, than subject themselves to the suspicion of such an imputation in their own families. For these reasons I have thought that magistrates should not have a discretionary power in varying the amount of the order, according to the supposed circumstances of the father. In Dorsetshire, the allowance is in all cases only 1*s.* 3*d.* per week; while in the Metropolitan parishes the orders vary from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* per week. The arrangements for orders of affiliation are chiefly left with the beadles, and from the great anxiety displayed sometimes by beadles, they are more than suspected of being interested in the decisions in some cases, by a bribe from the supposed father. Human nature will be human nature: Magistrates have their feelings like other men; and we know that a pretty face, or a tale told in an artless manner, often works wonders. If relief must be given for illegitimate children, some period should be fixed upon at which the liability of the parish should cease. At Manchester, no relief is allowed after nine years of age; while in Lambeth the relief is given until fourteen. I think parishes should be allowed to compound with the fathers in one sum or by instalments, with security. I would rather, however, say, that all compulsory allowance should cease, and nature should be left to effect that which human laws have proved unequal to.

Great impositions are practised under the present mode of making provision by money payments to the mother. I recollect a case, where the mother and child both died within a month after obtaining the order; and the sister, a married woman, allured by the receipt of 3*s.* 6*d.* weekly, palmed her own child upon the parish as the bastard, and received the 3*s.* 6*d.* per week for three years before the fraud was discovered.

I think

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I think that, at all events, allowance or provision for illegitimate children should be the same in all cases; I think the mother should only be allowed to place the child in the parish workhouse, and give it up entirely at the end of twelve months; and I know, in that case not one in twenty would part with them.

What proportion of the paupers under your charge do you believe to have had a surplus of wages beyond what was requisite for a comfortable subsistence, a surplus which they might have put by (had there been adequate inducements), to guard against the destitution by which they were pauperized?—I might have mentioned, when stating the results of my investigation of the causes of pauperism in the 300 cases, that the greater number of the men admitted, that they had long been in the receipt of good wages, from which they might have saved, and expressed their regret at their improvidence; as they might, if they had been careful, have kept themselves from the parish. Here again, the practice of taking pledges to meet occasional wants interferes to check provident habits. We know that the wants which small loans are obtained to relieve are not important, and that the people would often have to meet them if the pawnbrokers were not so open. One man I recollect, named Nathaniel Arrow, admitted that he had had at one time above 1,000*l.* left him, and he thought he would see how a man could live on 1,000*l.* a year; he accordingly started his horse and chaise, took an excursion into the country, and in less than twelve months had spent every shilling.

From the whole tendency of your evidence, as to the superiority of the larger parishes over the small ones, it is to be presumed, you consider that for the same reasons, county management affords better means of diminishing the evils of pauperism than the larger parishes?—Precisely so.

Does your observation enable you to give any opinion on the further subject of a central or national management under some central authority, as compared with a county management?—I do not speak from any speculation, but from a close attention to the subject; for the opinions which I entertain have been forced upon my mind by the facts which have come under my own observation. I have long concluded that any efficient management must differ materially from the present system. I have seen sets of officers succeed sets; I have seen a great many plans and systems suggested and tried; I have seen them tried by officers of the highest respectability and intelligence, and the little good derived from the practical operation of their plans utterly defeated by their successors, who, though equally honest, come into office with different opinions and views. Here and there an extraordinary man will come into office, and succeed very satisfactorily. But when he goes, there is generally an immediate relapse into the old system. His example works no permanent change in his own parish, still less is it attended to in the adjacent parishes. In short, I am quite convinced, from all my experience, that no uniform system can be carried into execution, however ably it may be devised; nor can any hopes of permanent improvement be held out, unless some central and powerful control is established. The present vicious system is so rooted in the habits of the people, that I do not think that it would be in the power of the existing parish officers to alter it. However determined they might be to do so, in a very large proportion of cases, they cannot act or make any improvement; for they are even now obliged to yield relief to the worst objects under the influence of fear. I know that, in many parishes, the officers are very much gratified by the exercise of power, and would very reluctantly yield to any interference with what they call “their privileges;” but still I would say that the good sense and respectability of the country would overcome all ignorant and selfish opposition of this sort. Ignorant or interested persons talk about the advantages of people applying their money and managing their own affairs, in opposition to any plan of central management; but however great the mismanagement of this or any other government that I have ever heard of may be, there never was a tax so harshly and vexatiously levied, or so badly and corruptly expended, as the tax raised for the relief of the poor. It is the only one raised and appropriated immediately by the payers themselves, and it is in every respect the very worst.

Be so good as to specify some of the advantages which you think would be attainable from a central management?—In the first place (setting aside the superior economy and skill of the establishment for a central management) one great point I have always considered would be in obtaining a uniformity of diet throughout the country. At present there are scarcely two parishes that agree either as to quantity or quality: the cost in some being as low as 2*s.* 6*d.* per head per week, whilst in others it is as high as 6*s.* or 8*s.* They only agree in this, that they are all much better than the diet obtained by the greater proportion of working men out of the house. In the single article of butter, a labourer's family, the man, his wife and four or five children, seldom (even when in the receipt of good wages) obtain more than from $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to 1 lb. amongst them per week, whilst the same family in most workhouses would have at least 3 lbs. of butter in the week. I have examined many parochial diet tables, and I do not know any place except Gosport where the diet is so low as that of the independent labourer.

To what do you ascribe the difference between the parishes in their diet?—In the parishes where the lower contract is taken, articles which are there considered luxuries, or at least not absolute necessities of life, are omitted. The following is a copy of the dietary for P.L. (A.)—III.

Appendix (A.)

Reports,

E. Chadwick,
Esq.CENTRAL
CONTROL.

The greater number of Paupers have been in the enjoyment of surplus wages.

Central or national as compared with county or district management.

No uniform system can be carried into execution unless powerful control is established.

There never was a tax so vexatiously levied or so corruptly expended as the tax for the poor, which is raised and expended by the payers themselves.

Appendix (A.)

Lambeth, where the contract is at 3 s. 11 d. per head per week : in Gosport, I take the contract at 2 s. 8 d. per head per week.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

CENTRAL
CONTROL.

MEN AND WOMEN.

		Breakfast and Supper.	Dinner.
Monday	-	Bread 13 oz. { 2 oz. cheese or 1 oz. butter }	1 pint leg of beef soup.
Tuesday	-	{ Ditto - - - ditto 1 pint milk porridge - ditto }	1 lb. rice pudding.
Wednesday	-	Bread 13 oz. - - ditto	7 oz. boiled beef and vegetables.
Thursday	-	{ Ditto - - - ditto 1 pint milk porridge - ditto }	1 pint leg of beef soup.
Friday	-	Bread 13 oz. - - ditto	7 oz. boiled beef and vegetables.
Saturday	-	{ Ditto - - - ditto 1 pint milk porridge - ditto }	1 pint leg of beef soup.
Sunday	-	Bread 13 oz. - - ditto	7 oz. boiled beef and vegetables.

One quart table beer per day.

Extra for the sick, mutton and broth, beef tea, wine, porter, milk, &c. or whatever is directed by the visiting apothecary.

FIVE EXTRA DINNERS.

Easter.—Legs of mutton 7 oz. with baked potatoes, and 1 pint of porter each person.

Whitsuntide.—Ditto - - - ditto - - - ditto.

Bean Feast.—Bacon 7 oz. with beans, and 1 pint of beer each.

Pea Feast.—Bacon 7 oz. with $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of peas, and 1 pint of porter each.

Christmas-day.—Roast beef 7 oz. with 1 lb. potatoes baked, 1 lb of plum pudding, and 1 pint of strong beer each.

Are the paupers of Gosport as well satisfied with their diet as the Lambeth workhouse inmates are with the diet given them there?—Yes; they are even better satisfied.

Conception of the
paupers as to what
they ought to have,
rise with what is
given to them.

Then you find that the conceptions of this class of people, as to which they ought to have, rise in proportion to what is given them?—Precisely so; it is a settled thing; there can be no doubt of it. This may always be seen in those places where there is any considerable distribution of coals, clothes, or other things, from benevolent societies or individuals. It is universally the case, that there is in those places much more discontent and disorder than in those places where no such gifts are distributed. The most glaring impositions are attempted by paupers with impunity: in short, they frequently form subjects of merriment. I recollect a young man applying to the committee at Newington for relief. As he appeared to be strong and able-bodied, the overseer told him he could not relieve him. The man pleaded illness; the overseer asked what medical man attended him. "Dr. Frampton," was the reply. "Well," said the overseer, "you must get a certificate from Dr. Frampton before I can relieve you." In about an hour the man returned, and produced with the greatest impudence the following certificate:—

"This is to certify, That I am very ill, and not able to work at present.

"Dr Frampton."

Effectsof uniformity
of diet,

What advantages do you expect to result from an uniformity of diet?—In the first place, it would do away the strong temptation which paupers now have to remove from what they call "bad parishes" to others which they call "good parishes," or from good parishes to better, or to stay in good parishes, instead of seeking work elsewhere. If there were uniformity of diet and other treatment, it would make no material difference in which parish a man was kept. There would not be, on the one hand, the mischievous shifting, and, on the other hand, the mischievous continuance that there now is. Frauds in settlements, and the attendant expenses, and the expenses and trouble of removals, would be materially lessened. The necessity of uniform diet, and the important effect which it has upon the administration of the Poor Laws, it appears to me has never yet received the attention which it deserves. It would be more especially available against the most dangerous and fearfully burthensome part of the system, the money payments to the out-door poor. Uniformity of diet and management would also enable every parish to know what the cost of the poor ought to be, and would enable them to detect many frauds. When the diet varies, you have no means of doing this, and no two diets agree. At present, people say the expenditure in our parish is so much per head, whilst in such another parish it is so much less, without at all considering the difference in diet, or other local circumstances, all of which you must consider before you can decide whether the pecuniary management of parishes is comparatively good or bad. It would save the parishes and parish-officers from those bickerings, and the ill feeling which is occasioned by this hidden cause of the expense of their poor. It is a very common thing for parishes to look at the great number and expense of the poor, and, without taking into account the dietaries and other local circumstances, to compare them with other parishes, and attribute fraud or mismanagement to officers, who have really managed as well as the system will permit. A prescribed uniformity of diet would also check the tendency which there is at present in parochial management to a constant increase of diet and accumulation of comforts, from the

the interference and influence of humane but mistaken individuals. Parishes are always subject to such influences as I have mentioned, with reference to the interference of Mr. Randal Jackson, and such benevolent individuals, who cannot from their position be expected to see that every comfort bestowed on the idle is a bounty to the improvident, and an injury and cruelty to the industrious.

From this statement it is to be presumed you contemplate the discontinuance of all pecuniary out-door relief, or the rendering that relief also uniform?—I am certainly of opinion, that if out-door relief is given at all, it should be given in kind, as I have found, on investigating the cases, that such relief is not applied to the purposes contemplated in nine cases out of ten; but if a cautioned system of workhouses, under a central management, could be established, then the out-door management might be usefully discontinued. A large proportion of the applications for out-door relief are made, first, in the confidence that there is not room in the workhouse for one-third of those who insist upon relief; and secondly, that from the keep in the workhouse being extravagant, the parish-officers will prefer giving any single applicant, and much more any family, a weekly pension to taking them into the house. Men serve during their lives in the army, or the navy, and sustain wounds and extreme hardships; and are, nevertheless, obliged to maintain during all that time a good character to entitle them to a pension of sixpence a day; whilst you will find that in the metropolis thousands of thieves, prostitutes, and all over the country tens of thousands of the worst characters, obtain weekly allowances or pensions, as “their right,” immediately that they demand them. If all were taken into the house, and the diet for the able-bodied pauper were what it ought to be, the same effects would follow that are noted in an account of the establishment of several workhouses published in 1725. “Very great numbers of lazy people, rather than submit to the confinement and labour of the workhouse, are content to throw off the mask, and maintain themselves by their own industry. And this was so remarkable here, at Maidstone, that when our workhouse was finished, and public notice given, that all who came to demand their weekly pay should be immediately sent thither, little more than half the poor upon the list came to the overseers to receive their allowance.”

You propose then that the diet, besides being uniform in amount, should be uniformly reduced in quantity and quality?—I do. The national diet should be low, even to all classes. The wealthy, and all those who had the means, would then have an ample opportunity of exercising their benevolence, by adding, by voluntary contributions, to the comfort of deserving poor. And here I would wish to express my decided belief that any fear that the condition of the deserving poor would be made worse by such a change is entirely groundless. I have repeatedly remarked that many of the old poor in workhouses, by assistance from their friends, are enabled to indulge themselves in articles of luxury, such as green pease or fresh salmon, long before most of the tradesmen or rate-payers would deem it prudent to pay the price for them, and it is not likely they would be less assisted when their wants would be supposed to be more urgent. As to the food and clothing of the undeserving, the advantage of relief in kind is as a check to misapplication; but even if the officers had sufficient fortitude to carry such a regulation into effect, it would not do for them to say, “We have determined to alter the allowance.” They must be enabled to say, “We cannot help it; we are compelled to do it;” and it must be apparent that this is really the case. The controlling power must be strong, and be at a distance. It is only by some such system that the condition of the pauper can be reduced to that of the independent labourer, which is the grand effort to be made; for if it is not made, you will surely have the independent labourers place themselves in the more advantageous condition of paupers, which they have now the means of doing.

Parish officers must be enabled to say that they cannot help the change.

You are of course aware that such extensive changes are not free from danger, and have considered it?—I have, and I am well aware that any sudden change might be attended with much mischief; not from the in-door poor, who might, without difficulty, be gradually brought to submit to regulations, but from persons in the habit of receiving out-door relief in money, the system now being so much interwoven with their habits. The first thing to be done would be obtaining uniformity of management, and then of diet. The next would be the gradual reduction of the relief, penny by penny, and ounce by ounce. The very old, who have been brought up under the present regulations, might be allowed to continue, so long as they lived, in the enjoyment of the same comforts. All new applicants should, however, at once be subject to the new and strict regulations.

Have you had, within your own observation, an instance of the reduction of the allowances to a whole body of paupers?—Yes; I recollect, about ten or eleven years since, the officers of the town of Maidstone were induced, from the great cost of the poor (which had increased, I think, to 7s. or 8s. per week each), to set on foot some inquiries. The result was that the officers reduced the diet; and after enforcing the alteration for about two months, they contracted with a person to keep the poor for about 3s. 3d. per head. They have continued the contracting system ever since.

Were there any riotings or burnings?—No; the disturbance was scarcely of a nature to be noticed, or more than the workhouse-keeper himself could easily control. They soon settled down into the reformed system very quietly. And I believe that the contractor, who was an intelligent man, obtained more work from the poor of that parish than could be expected from most parishes of that extent.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.CENTRAL
CONTROL.Regulations by Act
of Parliament im-
practicable.

Might not such general regulations as those to which you have alluded be prescribed by Act of Parliament?—No, certainly not. The regulations of any system must be very numerous; and though they may be uniform, it would be necessary to vary them from time to time; and unless Parliament was to do nothing but occupy itself with discussions on details of workhouse management, it would be impossible to effect any great alteration in that way. A great many regulations, however ably devised, must be experimental. Here unforeseen and apparently unimportant details might baffle the best plans, if there were not the means of making immediate alteration. Suppose a general regulation were prescribed by Act of Parliament, and it was found to want alteration; you must wait a whole year or more for an Act of Parliament to amend it, or the law must be broken. A central authority might make the alteration, or supply unforeseen omissions in a day or two. Besides, a central board or authority might get information immediately on the matters of detail. If they had for instance to settle some uniform diet, they could at once avail themselves of the assistance of men of science, physicians or chemists; but you would find that Parliament, if it could really attend to the matter, and would do any thing efficient, must have almost as many committees as there are different details. If there was a central board established, and it were easily accessible, as it ought to be, persons in local districts would consult them or make suggestions, who would never think of applying to Parliament. Who would think of applying to Parliament to determine whether four or five ounces of butter should be used as a ration in particular cases, and whether the butter should be Irish or Dutch? or, if Irish, whether Cork or Limerick; or to determine whether the old women's under-petticoats should be flannel or baize, and how wide or long? Yet on details of this sort, beneath the dignity of grave legislators, good or bad management would depend.

You then think it would be practicable for one central authority to control the management of the poor, and all their details throughout the kingdom?—Yes, I do; quite as easily, and indeed much more easily, and much better and cheaper than the barracks and dock-yards are managed throughout the kingdom. I cannot speak confidently of the management of those establishments; but I believe they are not under the uniformity of system, of which I think the system of management for the poor susceptible under a central control.

Do you consider a central board more eligible than any system of immediate action of the government?—I do; for while it would save the time of government for the performance of its other duties, a central board would, I think, excite less discontent, as the people would consider that they had still an appeal to the government or the legislature.

Do you think it practicable to bring parishes to the voluntary adoption of any uniform regulation when their importance is proved to them?—I certainly do not think it practicable. I think it utterly impossible to bring the 12,000 or 14,000 parishes in England and Wales to one mind upon any one subject, however clear the evidence may be; much less so to act with uniformity in any one point. The Commissioners must be well aware that great frauds are committed by paupers in the metropolis receiving relief from different boards on different board days. I have known instances of paupers receiving pensions from three or four different parishes. It was proposed some years ago, and it has been proposed from time to time to remedy this evil, which all the parishes are aware is very great, by one simple but effectual expedient, which it would be very easy to adopt, namely, by all the parishes paying on the same day; but they never could be got to do this. Individual conveniences prevented the remedy being applied, and the system of fraud still prevails, and will continue to prevail, so long as the present management prevails. Now, if the parishes in the metropolis cannot be got to act in concert for the suppression of an evil which affects only one part of the system, I think it will be seen that I am justified in my opinion, that any reform or co-operation in the country is quite hopeless without the establishment of a strong central management; nothing else will check the system. This has been my opinion for years, and I am confident that all the evidence will confirm it.

The fact is also, that unless some such change is effected, the practices of parishes in creating and throwing burthens on each other cannot be checked. The following are the practices to which I advert.

1st. As to the marriage of paupers. Marriages are frequently made up by parish officers in order to throw the charges on other parishes. To evade the odium and avoid publicity, the arrangement is often made by some pretended disinterested person, and the money repaid by the overseers: but the beadles are commonly employed to effect the arrangement. The following case occurred last week. A young man, named Charles Brockley, belonging to some parish in Hertfordshire, applied to the overseers of Lambeth, offering to marry a young woman, named Sarah Isles, an inmate of Lambeth workhouse (a most determined drunkard.) The overseers bargained with him for two guineas, and agreed to pay, in addition, the marriage fees. Monday, 22d April, one guinea was advanced to buy Isles some clothes; a gown was purchased, and Isles had it to make. Wednesday, 29th April, was appointed for the marriage. The gown was made by Thursday, and on Friday morning Isles pledged it for one shilling. On the Monday morning she related the circumstance to Mr. Drouet, with a mixture of pretended regret and laughter, imploring him to lend her a shilling to get the gown out of pawn, otherwise she could not be married. This was done. A person was sent to accompany them to church, and upon the completion of the marriage, paid the fees, and gave the husband the remaining guinea. Such marriages are very common. In cases where young women are likely to inflict a burden upon parishes, being pregnant, the reputed fathers are frequently induced by such arrangements to marry the girl, and thereby throw the burden of the young woman and her offspring upon another parish. During some inquiries I made, a beadle, in a *small district* of one parish, assured me

The voluntary
co-operation of
parishes imprac-
ticable.*Practices of parishes
in getting rid of
their own burthens
by creating greater
burthens for other
parishes.**1st. By pauper
marriages.*

me he had alone effected 50 marriages of this description in the course of a few years, and that the aggregate of such marriages in that parish in one year was very considerable.

2d. It frequently happens, that at the weekly committees a source of merriment is occasioned, and the beadles are complimented for the dexterity by which they have shifted the burden of some doubtful pauper, either by conducting them into some adjoining parish, or giving them money to sleep in some other parish previous to making application to the magistrates. The case of the Enfield pauper is an every-day occurrence; the helpless state of the pauper was the only singularity, and that attracted the attention of the public. In this way parochial authorities not unfrequently go beyond the law, and resort to petty stratagems to rid themselves of a burden.

In many parishes appeals take place quite reckless of the consequences, and too often, I am afraid, by the advice of some interested solicitors, who allow appeals to be carried into court for the purpose of being discharged by motion, knowing that no grounds exist for such appeals. In some cases the expense incurred would have kept the objects of dispute all their lives.

2d. *Shifting all other paupers.*

It is due to the officers of Lambeth to mention that parish as an exception. Mr. Watmore, the vestry clerk, who is not a solicitor, is very attentive to the interests of the parish in those matters, and the consequence is, Lambeth parish seldom lose above one in five of their appeals. Paupers have been known to swear to a parish, and after having been removed, to acknowledge they did not belong there, and get removed back again. I recollect, some 14 or 15 years since, at Limehouse, a man with his wife and family were removed about 60 miles into the country; they were sent back after a few days, and on questioning the man he admitted he wanted to see his friends in the country, and he adopted that course to save himself the expense. Instead of incurring severe punishment as an example to deter, the case excited laughter, and the man was applauded for his ingenuity. In well-regulated parishes, the orders of removal are executed by the beadles; but in many parishes the orders of removal occasion a source of great and unnecessary expense; the churchwarden or overseer frequently accompanying the pauper, converting the removal into an expensive country excursion.

3d. Suspended orders. The charges under suspended orders are sometimes excessive and unjustifiable. One case was removed to Lambeth, where the account was 70*l.* It is not uncommon for a *surgeon's bill*, under suspended order, to be 20*l.* or 30*l.* for a single case, although the stipulated remuneration to the surgeon of the workhouse for cases would not average above 2*s.* 6*d.* each case. The surgeon's charge in many instances equals and frequently exceeds those of the most respectable patients. Yet no blame can attach to the surgeon. The parochial surgeons generally are highly respectable; from the trifling amount paid in most parishes to the surgeon, the charges under suspended orders are in some measure looked to as a remuneration. A case occurred a few days since where the surgeon's charge under a suspended order was, I think, 3*l.* 10*s.* The pauper upon hearing the amount said there must be some mistake, as he had only been visited once, and received one draught and one pill; the surgeon was applied to, and explained the matter by saying that having three persons of the same name on the books, they had made out the wrong account. I have heard that a respectable surgeon of a parish near town calculates upon making 200*l.* per year by his suspended orders. Again, when a pauper is put under a suspended order, the custom of the parish is to make a more liberal allowance than they would to a pauper of their own under similar circumstances, being secure of all charges incurred during the suspension; thus a family belonging to the parish would receive 3*s.* per week; the same under a suspended order would be allowed 5*s.* per week.

3d. *Excessive charges under suspended orders.*

Have you ever formed any opinion as to the appointment of a central authority, whether it should be by popular election or otherwise?—Certainly not by popular election or delegation; for the requisite qualifications would not generally be appreciated; and we now find, that in the appointment of the permanent and more important parish officers, even where the electors have a direct interest in the appointment of persons of ability, they rarely take the peculiar qualifications into consideration, but vote from a desire to serve a friend or a favourite. It may be objected that this would, in some degree, be the case if the appointment of a central authority were with the government; but it could hardly fail to be so in a much less degree. In my opinion, the best mode of getting an efficient central management would be to concentrate the responsibility for good management in the chief of the new department, and allow him to select his assistants.

Central authority should not be popularly elected.

Have you formed any opinion as to the probable saving to be effected by a central and efficient management?—I should say, at least one half of the amount of the rates. This is shown by the instances where very imperfect trials of better systems have been made.

If a central board is established and moderately well conducted, so much good would attend the first regulations enforced, that I am convinced the public would afterwards be more gratified with this measure than with any other introduced by government.

I am of opinion that the workhouses at present in use would be found more than sufficient under a system of reformed management and diet. I may adduce the instances of the St. James's workhouse, where the present exorbitant diet was refused by 56 persons out of 60, to whom the house was offered, as an instance of what would follow elsewhere.

I have no doubt that the adoption of such a system of relief as that pointed at, would have the effect of preventing mendicity extensively. A very large proportion of the outdoor paupers, and no small proportion of the in-door paupers pursue the trade of mendicants, in addition to their other trades, and these would certainly be put a stop to. I have

Effects of strict management on the county rates.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.CENTRAL
CONTROL.

no hesitation in saying that this system would greatly diminish the county rates by stopping a great deal of vagrancy.

If instead of giving money to vagrants they were to receive relief in kind, and were passed from workhouse to workhouse, and in some cases to do a day's work for a day's food and lodging, do you think that many of them would continue their vagrant practices, or that they would accept passes at the public expense on such terms?—I decidedly think they would not accept passes on such terms; from my own observations, as well as from all I hear from parish officers, it is quite clear that two-thirds of the tramps apply for the money alone. They nearly all apply in the evening, when they know that the parish officers will sooner give them money than trouble themselves to send them into the house, or make any inquiries. A woman applied one evening at Lambeth, about eight o'clock, with pass tickets for about 30 women and children, and her face was apparently covered with scars, which she represented as having happened by the wheel of the waggon (in which they had been travelling) coming off, and which she said had also severely wounded several of the others. Mr. Drouet suspected she was an impostor, and insisted on seeing the plaister removed. This she resisted, which confirmed his suspicions, and upon examining her face it turned out the plaister had been applied to her face purely for the purpose of exciting pity, and to enable her the more easily to impose on the officers. The papers were all forged. They had their regular route papers made out from Portsmouth to Chelmsford, and had already received money of Newington parish, and most likely in all their line of journey from Portsmouth to London. The benefit to be derived from such regulations may be shown by the fact, that in some parishes where coarse lodging and spare food has been offered to the vagrants, the applications have been greatly reduced in number, and in some instances done away with. There would, under such a system, be a great reduction of the number of appeals, and this would save proportionably in the county rates, which as well as the particular parishes are burthened by the expense. There are many indirect sources of expense to the county connected with the administration of the Poor Laws, which might be stopped up by alterations in detail, and by a central control. These are petty expenses which are so trifling in their amount as to escape notice, and yet in the aggregate they are considerable. In my opinion, the powers of the board cannot be too large. I certainly think they ought to have visitorial powers, with regard to charities for the relief to the indigent, so as combine them for the attainment of the object, as well as to prevent their being directed mischievously.

The facts are such that there cannot be two opinions about them in the minds of practical men. I am sure that any large machinery is not only unnecessary, but it would be very mischievous. I agree that a very small board, the smaller and cheaper the better, with a few able members to settle the union of parishes, and afterwards visit them to see the regulations of the central board executed, would be all that would be required. The whole matter will be found beset with difficulties which can only be overcome by repeated efforts. There will be so much that is now to contend with, that the first establishment cannot be too simple in its machinery; a large machinery would be an incumbrance. The smaller the central board is the better.

Board management.

I have had a great deal of experience with board management of boards of different sizes, composed often of very clever men, and generally very good men of business, and I have always found that two or three active men of business will always do much more than any board; that the fewer hands will always do the business the best, and in a much shorter time. In fact, where the board is numerous, unless one or two persons have almost the sole management, the slowness and badness with which the business is done is always proportionate with the number of persons to do it. A board of 12 persons acting together, if they are paid, is notoriously to men acquainted intimately with the workings of these things, an institution of 10 or 11 sinecures, or if it be an unpaid board, it is an institution enabling 10 or 11 persons to obtain a share of the credit due to the intelligence and activity of one or two. The other members of the board are mere lookers on, whose best services are the supply of incidental observations and omissions, and when they all act, they only impose so much additional labour on the one or two who have taken great pains to originate measures to bring the rest over to their own way of thinking. A division of labour among equal persons who generally act on different principles, only creates confusion, and increases the difficulty of patching up measures, and for such a time as might be found requisite. There would, I conceive, be very great objections to the appointment of numerous stationary assistants, besides their not being requisite. The new board would still be responsible to the people's representatives in Parliament, and might at any time be removed by them.

Parishes of themselves will never adopt improved systems.

I think that there need be no disturbance of the statute of Elizabeth. Rules and regulations would, I think, accomplish the object. It may be said that various Acts already in existence allow of the proposed regulations and alterations, and that when they are made known they will be sure to be adopted, but to any person of practical experience such a proposition will appear exceedingly absurd, for the reason that before any alteration can be carried into effect a new body of ignorant officers come into power, and do not see or care to exert themselves to carry into execution the plans of their predecessors. However clearly the officers may see the interests of the parish (which are called their own interests) they the officers, will always consult their own interests or their own ease rather than those of the parish. Hitherto it has always been so, and it may be presumed that it will continue so.

I think it would be desirable that the board should have the power to exercise the powers of surveying of roads, for the purpose of the application of pauper labour. The power of control

control would be distinct from the ordinary power of management. With respect to central control, I am convinced that there need be no apprehension on the score of profusion. Those who have now the expenditure, on being relieved from the exercise of discretion, would become so many jealous censors, complaining of omissions, and errors, and mismanagement. They would be inspectors fully to be relied upon for the inspection of officers of whom they were no longer the patrons.

I consider, too, that the progress of the evil may be checked and additional benefits conferred on the deserving classes, and indeed on the undeserving, as it would be a benefit to them to subject them to the obligations of regular industry. The question of settlement would, under a national or central management, become a matter of very minor consideration. I think the parish rates might be settled amongst themselves. Any objection on the part of the less heavily burthened parishes to unite a management with those more heavily burthened, might be safely met by a guarantee that their rates should not be increased beyond the average amount for a given number of years past, say six or seven; whilst, on the other hand, they should have the benefit of any reduction. I state my opinions on this subject and the importance of a change with great earnestness; for having some stake in the country, I have long observed the accelerated progress of the system with great anxiety, as I see clearly that the same state of things of which you have an example in Bethnal Green, will sooner or later overtake the other parishes; the pauper population becoming too great for the industrious classes to bear; industry paralysed; rents diminishing; property absorbed, and all sinking down to a pauper level.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Thomas Langley.

I HAVE been in office 14 years, principally as out-door inspector of the parish of Mary-le-bone.

When you were here before, you stated that the result of your having offered work in the stone-yard to 900 able-bodied paupers at piece-work, at which they might have earned from 10s. to 18s. a week, was, that only 85 out of the 900 remained to work. If instead of paying the men in the stone-yard such wages as those from 10s. to 18s. a week, you had given them piece-work at about 1s. a day for a full day's work, and that 1s. had been given not all in money, but chiefly in kind, that is to say, if you had given them at the end of each day's work a four pound loaf of brown bread, and cheese, or other food, and 3d. to pay for the night's lodging, how many out of the 85, who remained to work at the full wages first mentioned would have remained to work for the remuneration of the latter description?—I do not think that 10 of them would have remained.

Effect of resorting to hard work for the unemployed.

If relief in kind: above a minimum subsistence.

Would less than six have remained to work?—Never having seen such an experiment tried, I could not undertake to speak confidently; but there might, out of so large a number, be half a dozen who are so peculiarly situated, as to accept work on such terms for a time.

The probable effect.

Then you consider that it would in any case only be for a time, meaning, I presume, for a short time?—Yes, some of them might stay one day, others three or four, but none of them, I conceive, for more than a week or so.

Would you consider the fact of a man accepting such work on such terms a sure test of his condition?—Yes, it would certainly be an infallible test of his being in a state of distress, and disposed to work, and unable to get work any where.

If I were to open a stone-yard in your parish, and to offer to give to all comers such work on such terms, how many square yards of stone do you think I should get broken?—I think none, or if any, very few, although four pounds of bread is a good allowance of food, and far above a starving point.

If such relief were thrown open to all comers, few, if any, would accept of it.

What evasions do you think could be resorted to?—The only evasion I can see is in the cases where a man evaded the work by pretending to be ill, which is a trick now resorted to, where men say, "they have a pain in their insides," and the doctor is not able to say positively that they have not; but these cases, judging from our present experience, would be very few.

Case of possible evasion.

Might not these cases be met by workhouse regulations, confining a man as a sick patient, treating him with a very low diet, or even medicines adapted to his alleged disorder?—Yes, that I think would fully meet the case I have supposed.

Do you see any cases in which such regulations (making the condition of the pauper on the whole less eligible than that of the independent labourer of the lowest class) do not constitute a self-acting test?—I certainly conceive it is a test which would go to the root of pauperism, if it were carried into full execution. I can see no mode of evasion but pretended sickness.

Such a self-acting test would go to the root of pauperism.

Do you see any difficulty in the way of the execution of those regulations?—None whatever.

Probable adoption of strict regulations.

Do you not think there would be any difficulty in the execution of such regulations by parish officers?—I do not doubt that they would in most instances be fully complied with.

But in smaller parishes than yours, where the petty shopkeepers have power and patronage in the supply of goods, do you not think they would break through any such regulations, or that if they did not, persons desirous of acquiring popularity and a character for benevolence might?—I think there might be such cases, but they would not be very frequent; it certainly would not take place in such a large parish as ours. In the smaller parishes.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.CENTRAL
CONTROL.Inspection and con-
trol would be re-
quisite in the
smaller country pa-
rishes.Effect on the settle-
ment laws.

parishes in the country the parish officers act more on their own opinion, and more independently of any legal decisions.

Do you think that in the town parishes any inspection by a superior officer for a district would be requisite to enforce the execution of such regulations as those described?—I do not think any such officer would be requisite in the town parishes. I think the regulations would execute themselves; but inspection and control would perhaps be requisite occasionally in the smaller country parishes. In the town parishes the persons relieved are mostly strangers to the officers until they are in office: in the country, however, the officers are generally connected directly or indirectly with the applicant or his family, or some branch of it, and are liable in this way to influences which would often require counteraction.

If such regulations could be adopted, how do you think they would affect the law of settlement?—It think the law of settlement would then be of very little consequence. Where a pauper has a doubtful settlement, it is now our practice to offer him labour, or to take him into the workhouse, as an experiment. We ever take families in, and we now, under all our disadvantages, get rid of three out of four of such cases. If we were under such regulations as would make a pauper's condition, whether in or out of the workhouse, not so good as the condition of a hardworking labourer of the lowest class, the experiment being much cheaper, we should naturally resort to it more frequently. In fact, if such regulations were established, I think we should very seldom incur the expense and trouble, or the risks, of a removal in any case.

Would the law of settlement remain then of any consequence in any case?—I do not know that it would; I cannot see that it would. I think that if such regulations were adopted as those mentioned, the labourers would become more provident, and that their habits would be greatly improved.

EXAMINATION of Mr. Leonard, Overseer of St. Giles, Middlesex.

Example of the ef-
fect of the parties
application of work.

IN the year 1831, we tried the application of labour at stone-breaking in 260 cases of able-bodied labourers, at piece-work, at 2s. per ton, at which work they might have earned about 2s. per day with tolerable application. That was in the summer; but during the winter, we gave them 2s. 6d. per ton. The labour performed from amongst the whole number only amounted to 9l. 18s. 2d. during six weeks. There were never more than five or six at work at the same time. The effect of the introduction of the stone-yard, and of work in the house, and generally for the able-bodied, was to produce such peace and order as had not existed before. I am sure that where there is no work there will certainly be disorder. Where I have heard of disorder in workhouses, and riots of paupers, I conclude, from the mere mention of such occurrences, that labour is not there properly applied, or the workhouses properly regulated.

The effect of the partial application of labour and relief in kind in our parish may be judged of from the following facts. In April 1830, the total number of poor receiving in-door and out-door relief in St. Giles, was 8,500; in December of the same year it was reduced to 7,000; in December 1831, after the application of the stone-yard, the number was 5,523; and last week (the last week in March 1833) the total number was 4,552. We formerly gave about 300l. weekly in out-door relief. We now give only 70l. in money, and about 100l. worth of bread and soup. This reduction of 130l. I consider to be chiefly owing to our giving relief in kind.

I am certainly of opinion that if regulations could be enforced which would place the pauper in every case below the condition of the lowest class of independent labourers, that these regulations would supersede investigations of officers with relation to able-bodied paupers. This, in fact, is the principle of our employment for able-bodied paupers at the stone-yard, and has produced the effects anticipated, so far as it has been carried into operation.*

EXAMINATION of Mr. W. Hickson, jun. of the Firm of Hickson & Sons, Wholesale Shoe Warehouse, Smithfield.

Of one hundred
who pretended they
would work, one
proved to be sin-
cere.

WE once engaged to supply the workhouse of St. Giles's with shoes, on the condition that we should give work to all the journeymen shoemakers who were then receiving relief from the board. This was about four years back. We expected a great number to apply, and made preparations for upwards of a hundred; the number of applicants were however under twenty. Of these some endeavoured to spoil the work, that they might be dismissed and have an excuse for returning to the board, others ran away with the materials, and finally but one man remained, who was steady and industrious, and is working for us to this day.

EXAMINATION

* I may observe, with reference to the experiments of the application of labour to the paupers, that they are in general well aware that these applications are experiments, and as such resist them, well-knowing to be worth while to work hard for a fortnight or a month, or even longer to defeat them. They view it as a battle for a year, or a life of comparative ease, and they are frequently victorious.—E. C.

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EXAMINATION of Mr. *William Winkworth*, Overseer of the Parish of *St. Mary's, Reading*.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.MANAGEMENT
IN EXTENDED
DISTRICTS.
Union of parishes
a means of provid-
ing labour.
Examples of.

IN this town great advantages would be derived by an union of the parishes. There would be great gain derived from an union: first, in obtaining more efficient officers and administrators; next, in systematic and united management; thirdly, in more economical expenditure; and fourthly, in finding things for labour, and in directing the labour of the able-bodied paupers.

The town, for example, wants draining. We have brick-makers and carpenters and other labourers on the parish receiving relief; and the whole town might be well drained by the labour of these paupers, at the expense of materials only, bricks, wood, mortar and sand. This however is a work which the parishes cannot, or will not, undertake separately: it is prevented by petty jealousies and dissensions, and the want of able officers to direct the work of the paupers. The owners of premises well situated and well drained, say, "Drainage is a benefit to the owners of the property, and we do not see why we should be called upon to contribute money for their benefit." The owners of the houses where the drainage is most wanted say, "We can get no rents to pay for the work, and the nuisances which are caused by the want of it must therefore continue." No account is taken of the necessity of finding work of any sort for the able-bodied paupers; nothing can be done with the separate parishes governed by open vestries, no cordial co-operation can be got, and the benefit of considerable labour is lost. As the surveyor of the road from this town to Basingstoke, and also of the road from hence to Shillingford, I can state, from my observation of the several parishes (nineteen in number) through which these roads pass, that very considerable labour might be found, under good direction, in improving their private roads. This is an instance of the sort of work which might frequently be found for paupers. In some of the parishes the roads are kept in very good order, but this is mere accident; whilst in the immediately adjoining parishes more money will be expended, and the roads will nevertheless be in so bad a state that the parish is indictable for them. The most conspicuous examples of the skill used in one parish, rarely produce any imitation in the next parish. The farmers, in general, steadily adhere to their old practices, and never willingly conform to any improvements; they employ waggons where carts would serve much better; they throw down on the roads materials totally inapplicable, and think they can mend them with big loose stones, which stones would really be useful, if they were broken up.

I have sometimes twelve and sometimes thirty men in my employment as surveyor, but I have no paupers; I will not have them; I cannot trust them; they are so lazy and demoralized, that they cannot be got to do any thing without constant goading and superintendence. They require a superintendent to every half dozen of them. Sometimes one of them is appointed as a superintendent of the others; but that is of very little use, as it requires some one constantly to superintend the superintendent. Small parishes have no officer who can be employed, nor can they pay any one who can be depended on, to see that the paupers do their work properly. Independent workmen, who have not been demoralized by being admitted on the parish, do not require the same expense of superintendence.

If several parishes were united, they could afford to pay for some one to direct the labour of the paupers for the whole of them.

If provisions were supplied, and all parochial work were performed by contract, excessive waste would be arrested. I think that it is only by the union of parishes, under a select vestry, that proper officers can be obtained, or a systematic management be instituted. I am confident that a select vestry would save more than one-third of the expense in this district. The obstacles to the union of the parishes here arise chiefly from the wealthy and less burdened parishes, who object to the union on the ground of an apprehended increase of their rates from the greater burdens of the parishes chiefly inhabited by the poor. But I would meet this objection, by allotting to each parish only its own share of burdens, by allowing each to raise money as they pleased, and only uniting them for the purpose of expenditure.

The Rev. Mr. Randall states, in reference to the 22d Query,

This is a very difficult question to answer. I should expect that if such a measure were adopted, the *ultimate* effect would be to raise the wages of diligent labourers, and consequently to better their condition. But I fear that the *immediate* effect would be, to involve parish officers in many difficulties, and the poor in a good deal of suffering, which would not always fall upon heads that deserved it. The operation of the Poor Laws has sunk the rate of wages so low as to make it next to impossible for the most industrious and thrifty labourer to support a large family upon them; and the law, or at least the administration of it, has given the poor man a distinct understanding that he will be at liberty to draw upon the parish to supply the deficiency. Doubtless it was an error in the legislature to hold out such an undertaking; but I see nothing morally wrong in the poor man's accepting it; and I have no doubt that many labourers who are now in the receipt of such relief are men of respectable character, willing to do all they can for themselves, but feeling themselves entitled to apply to the parish for such further means of necessary support as their own wages will not furnish. These persons must, under the operation of the proposed enactment, be thrown upon the parish; because it can hardly be expected that wages should *immediately* rise sufficiently to enable a labourer to keep a large family. This would be, and would be felt to be, a condition of degradation; for it must be of the very essence of a plan of this sort that the parish

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.PRINCIPLES OF
ADMINISTERING
RELIEF ADOPTED
BY THE LABOUR-
ING CLASSES.

pauper should be worse kept and less respected than the meanest labourer who keeps himself. Still, though the condition of these persons would be much to be lamented, I should be inclined to face that inconvenience. We cannot hope to effect a decided change in a system so interwoven with the whole frame of society as the Poor Laws without hurting somebody; and here the mischief would probably last but a short time. It would soon appear to be the interest of the farmers to employ such men as were really good labourers upon wages high enough to take them off the parish; and at any rate the sufferers must be relieved in a few years by the growing-up of their families.

But the great difficulty that strikes me is, what is to be done with all these pauper families while they lie upon their parishes? The question which I am attempting to answer seems to suppose that they are to be employed upon the parish account. But how are they to be employed? The parish must not let out their services to hire. If this is allowed, nothing whatever will be gained; for the supply of such parochial labourers will keep up the number of hands, and keep down the wages of labour exactly to the point where both now stand. The parish officers must, therefore, either find some employment for them which might benefit the parish, without encroaching upon the ordinary market for labour, which I think it would in most parishes be impossible to do; or else they must be kept in idleness, with just the minimum quantity of the necessities of life doled out to them; a state of things too obviously pregnant with mischief to be ventured upon. In *this* parish I think the poor might be beneficially employed in making roads; the parish having been lately inclosed, many cottages and many fields *are only* approachable by *drift ways*, which are mere green lanes, almost impassable in winter, the soil being a stiff clay. The inhabitants of these houses are consequently cut off from the village, and remain in a very uncivilized state. It would be a public benefit to turn these lanes into good roads; but the *vestry* will never agree to such a measure, unless under legislative compulsion, because it would require an immediate *outlay*, from which *temporary* occupiers would derive no advantage, and also because the chief benefit, after all, would be to the cottagers, not to the large rate-payers.

PRINCIPLES ADOPTED BY INDEPENDENT LABOURERS IN THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THEIR OWN FUNDS.

John Tidd Pratt, Esquire, Examined.

You are the barrister appointed to see that the detailed regulations of savings' banks and friendly societies conform to the intention and spirit of the regulations laid down by the legislature in the 9th of Geo. IV. c. 92, and 10 Geo. IV. c. 56?—Yes, I am.

Are the regulations of the friendly societies drawn by you or by the parties themselves?—Since my appointment I do not believe that I have drawn more than one set. They are invariably sent to me ready drawn.

Do you presume that the parties who draw those regulations are of the labouring classes?—Yes, excepting in those instances where the management is in honorary members.

What proportion do they form to the rest?—Probably not one in fifty.

To what number of regulations have you certified since the central control of these institutions has been confided to you?—I have examined and certified to the rules of about 3,000 benefit societies, and between 400 and 500 savings' banks.

Can any alteration be made in the rules of these institutions without your authority?—No; every alteration must be certified by me previous to enrolment.

So that you know the original rules of management framed by the labouring classes for the conduct of these institutions, as well as the subsequent rules which subsequent experience may induce them to adopt?—Yes.

Was this Act, instituting the central control, brought in with the concurrence of the labouring classes or the members of the friendly societies?—This Act (the 10 Geo. IV. c. 56,) was brought into Parliament by Mr. Portman, at the instance and with the concurrence of the delegates from the friendly societies composed, I have been informed, of the labouring classes throughout the country.

In the rules framed by the labouring classes themselves to which you have certified, do you ever find any allowances of partial relief, such as relief in aid of wages or relief on account of the number of a family?—No, I never met with an instance, and if such a rule had been submitted to me, I should have refused to authorize it, as I should have held it to be contrary to the intentions of the legislature, and also because I should have known that it was fraught with the ruin of the society.

Then do the labouring classes themselves, in the rules submitted to you, reject all partial relief, or relief on any other ground than the utter inability to work?—Invariably.

By what penalties do they usually endeavour to secure themselves from fraud on the part of persons continuing on the sick list after they have become able to work?—In all cases by utter expulsion and enforcement of the repayment of the money from the period at which it was proved the party was able to work.

Does that utter expulsion take place whatever may have been the period at which the party had contributed towards the society?—Yes; and all his contributions are forfeited to the society; and so strict are they in the enforcement of these regulations, that I have known them expel a party for stirring the fire, or putting up the shutters of his window, these acts being considered by them evidence of the party being capable of going to work. A small

All partial relief
forbidden by the
working men.Admit of no
exceptions for
emergencies.

shopkeeper

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shopkeeper has been expelled for going into his shop; and the only exception I have found in favour of such a rule is, that of a party being allowed to sign a receipt, or to give orders to his servant. They are perfectly well aware, from experience, that to give relief in an apparently hard case would open the door to a whole class of cases, which would ruin them. The other day the steward of a friendly society came to consult me as to the reinstatement of a member who had been expelled for having neglected to pay his quarter's subscription on the regular quarter night half an hour after the books were closed. The party had been a member 32 years, and during that time had received little or no relief. The case struck me as an extremely hard one, and I endeavoured to prevail on the steward to reinstate the member, but the steward stated to me so many facts, showing that if they yielded to this one case that it would determine a whole class of cases, and let in so much abuse, that I was ultimately forced to agree in the necessity of the decision of the society. These rules may appear to be capricious and arbitrary, but my observation leads me to believe that they are necessary to protect the society. Although there is an extremely severe enforcement of them, societies are seriously injured, and frequently ruined, by the frauds committed under this mode of relief, notwithstanding the incessant vigilance exercised against them.

What description of vigilance is that?—It is generally provided by the rules that a domiciliary visit shall be paid by the stewards, or by a member, generally every day; these visits are to be paid at uncertain times, that they may increase the chances of detection. It is also usually provided that a sick member shall not leave his house before or after such an hour, and that on his leaving home at other times he shall leave word in writing where he has gone, by what line of road he has gone, and by what line he intends to return, in order that the stewards or members may track him. In some instances the members follow up these precautions by requiring a member, when he “declares off” the box, to swear that he was unable to work during the whole time that he has been receiving relief of the society.

Are these precautions effectual?—No; notwithstanding the utmost vigilance serious frauds are committed, especially by the members of those trades who can work at piece-work within doors; such, for example, as tailors, shoemakers, watchmakers and weavers. An operative of these trades keeps his door shut and works, and when the visitor comes, the work is put under the bed clothes, or otherwise concealed, and he is found in bed apparently sick. I find that in those societies where the members' work is of a nature to render fraud liable to detection, such as painters, plumbers, glaziers, stone-masons, carpenters, and any other occupation that takes a man out of his own room, the money paid for sickness in the course of a year is less than in societies composed of equal numbers of the class of members before mentioned. From the opportunities of fraud I always judge of the certainty of fraud, and from those opportunities the certainty of the ruin of societies may be predicted.

Have you as a barrister had much poor law practice?—Yes, I have practised 10 years at sessions, I have also edited Bott's Poor Laws and other works connected with the subject.

Would you apply to the progress of out-door relief by parishes the same rules as are founded on the experience of the labouring classes in benefit societies?—Certainly; and considering a parish as a large friendly society (the members being mostly honorary, or persons who contribute without the intention of partaking of the benefits of the contribution, as the majority in most parishes are), I should look to them much more rigidly.

If the regulations of a parish, or of a friendly society consisting of a parish, were brought to you to authorize under the statute of Elizabeth, would you certify them if you found in them rules for granting partial relief of any sort, or relief in aid of wages, or relief according to a bread money scale, or relief in proportion to the number of a family, or out-door relief of any description?—As a lawyer I should undoubtedly consider all such allowances entirely at variance with the spirit and intention of the statute of Elizabeth, and I should without hesitation reject them. My experience, also derived from the observation of less dangerous regulations in friendly societies, would enable me to pronounce them to be mischievous and ruinous to whatever community adopted them. I am sure that no members of any benefit society, incomplete as their knowledge is, would ever frame rules upon such ruinous principles. The only definite ground of relief, as it appears to me, is utter inability to work, and so it appears to the labouring classes themselves, for whose benefit, and with whom I act, for their allowances are always made upon that ground.

In what way do the members generally regard parochial assistance? As discreditable?—In their rules it is generally provided, that in the case of the death of a member notice be given to the treasurer, who summonses two of the stewards, and, says the rule, “They both shall attend such funeral, and see that the corpse is decently interred, and free from parish grants;” or it is expressed, as in the following rule: “That the president and vice president shall attend funerals of members and their wives, see they be decent, and free from parochial assistance; and if either of them neglect so to do, he shall be fined 5s.; but for such attendance each of them shall receive 2s. 6d. from the fund.”

In these institutions, is the condition of a member receiving relief, or living without work, ever allowed to be as eligible on the whole as the condition of a member living by his work?—In most cases the allowances made by the societies are so adjusted as to make it the interest of every member not to receive relief from the society so long as he can earn his usual wages. The average allowance which they make is about one-third of what a member can earn. Thus, if the average earnings of the members of a benefit society were 1l. 4s. a week, the allowance in the case of sickness would be, on an average of the whole time of the sickness, about 8s. a week. During the last session Mr. Slaney brought in a Bill for the purpose of sanctioning the formation of societies for the relief of members when out of

Take care that the condition of a person receiving relief shall never be so eligible as the condition of a person living on the fruits of his own labour.

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

PRINCIPLES OF
ADMINISTERING
RELIEF ADOPTED
BY THE LABOUR-
ING CLASSES.

*Central control of
Friendly Societies,
why opposed.*

employment. At his instance I made inquiries amongst some of the most intelligent and respectable of the labouring classes as to what should be the extent of allowance to those who were out of work. I suggested to the parties that one-half the usual wages might be a proper allowance. The unanimous reply of all the operatives with whom I conversed on the subject was, that an allowance of one-third would be ample, and that more than that would only induce the members to continue on the society rather than endeavour to find work.

Has not the instance of a central supervision, in the case of the friendly societies and saving banks, been in any degree unpopular?—With respect to savings banks, quite the contrary; and with regard to friendly societies I may state that, during the last five years since the Act passed, there have been not more than about 15 petitions from England; not one from Ireland, Scotland or Wales; and I have every reason to believe that 10 of those petitions have been got up by one individual.

But in consequence of the interference have not societies neglected to be enrolled or come within the provisions of the Act?—I think not on that account, as none of the legal benefits were abridged by the last Act. But in a large proportion of cases, the societies are got up at the instance of publicans, and in towns by undertakers; in the rural districts by publicans chiefly. They are usually held at a public-house. On an inspection of many of the rules, it frequently appeared that the whole was mainly a piece of machinery to get a large sum of money expended monthly in drink, or at the annual feast, to which, generally speaking, every member was compelled to contribute, whether present or absent. It has been stated to me by a member, that he has drank more beer of the society during a year than the amount of his annual subscription. Of course, the members living in a village in which the public-house is situated, and where the club is held, would attend more regularly to “drink for the good of the house” than those who lived at a distance. The inevitable effect was, that those who in old age or sickness claimed the benefits for which they had saved and subscribed, found their stock gone and the society dissolved. I have never, therefore, sanctioned any rule requiring a compulsory payment for drinking or feasting. Formerly, too, the money was invested in many cases with the publican, or lent to individuals on the security of their note of hand; and when these failed, as was too often the case, the societies were ruined. By the late Act the whole of the funds must be invested in the funds, in a savings bank, or on a mortgage of real property. This “interference too” has naturally excited great discontent, not on the parts of “the people” but on the parts of those whose private interests had been interfered with by the central control, by which an administration, according to the intention of the legislature, has been ensured. If the same sort of control were established by the legislature with respect to the administration of the Poor Laws, there would probably be the same source of discontent, not from the rate-payers, whose purses were protected, but from those whose profitable powers would be abridged. In illustration of the means used to prevent the enrolment of societies, it has been mentioned to me that in one part of Sussex a handbill was exhibited shortly after the passing of the Act. This handbill recommended societies not to come under the Act, as the Government intended to seize the money in order to pay the expenses of the battle of Navarino. I was told that this bill was issued by the publicans.

Were not these detailed regulations formerly submitted to and sanctioned by the magistrates?—Yes; but, with the exception of two or three counties, the rules appear to have been allowed and enrolled, without much attention to the provisions of the legislature. Rules directly illegal and usually ruinous were sanctioned by the magistrates, who from their avocations could scarcely be expected to give the requisite time, or to have the special knowledge necessary for sanctioning such regulations.

Do the members of benefit societies ever manifest any distrust of the Government?—None whatever. I never met with an instance. On the contrary, members have stated to me that they are now quite sure of having all rules enrolled which are within the Act of Parliament. They were before subject to all sorts of local caprices; the mistakes and caprices of the magistrates. In certifying to rules of societies submitted to me, I am guided entirely by their conformity to the Act of Parliament. I cannot be influenced by local circumstances because I cannot know them. The jealousy which the members display is usually jealousy of the interference of people locally connected. When I frame rules I usually suggest that the trustees and treasurer should be honorary members, and that one half of the managers should be benefit members, *i. e.* labouring men.

No relief given on
account of bastard
children.

What is the course adopted by the labouring classes in their friendly societies with regard to illegitimate children?—In female societies, which are numerous and increasing, they utterly deprive the parties of relief and expel them. In male societies they allow no benefit on the birth of a child, unless such child is born in wedlock. In those societies which allow an annuity or other payment to a widow on the death of a member, such benefit is forfeited by her having lived apart from her husband during his lifetime, or having had an illegitimate child after his death. Their rules are usually of the tenor of the following:

“We do also agree to and with each other, that if any widow, pensioner of this society, who shall be proved to be with child, or be delivered of a child, either alive or still-born, at any time after she has been a widow eleven months, that then and from thenceforth every such widow shall forfeit all her right and title to the pension of 10*l.* per annum, and to be for ever debarred from every part thereof.

“No benefit will be allowed for the birth or death of a child that is not born in wedlock.”

Then in all cases they utterly disallow relief to a woman who has a bastard child?—Yes, both male and female societies.

Was the withdrawal of the local control over the rules and regulations opposed in Parliament?—The provision of a central control was passed without any opposition in either House.

Do you introduce in all districts the amendments which you have found beneficial in particular districts?—I invariably forward to all the institutions suggestions of the expediency of adopting rules which have been found to work beneficially; and I also warn them of mischievous results experienced from particular rules in other places. For example, with regard to the former, I found in one of the savings' banks (the Exeter) a rule which allowed the trustees to apply to the member's benefit any portion of the deposits in case of insanity or imbecility; and not one of the other savings' banks possessed such a rule. The consequence was, that when a member became insane, they would have had no other mode to enable them to apply the member's money to his use than an application to the Lord Chancellor. Sometimes the sums to be applied were only 10*l*. This rule I communicated by circular to the members of every savings' bank, with a recommendation that it should be adopted. Many of them have already adopted it; and I believe that in a short time it will be generally adopted. Where I find a good rule, I send it to all; and when I find a bad rule, I stop it in all, and the chances of finding good rules are just in proportion to the extent of the jurisdiction.

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.PRINCIPLES OF
ADMINISTERING
RELIEF ADOPTED
BY THE LABOUR-
ING CLASSES.*Launcelot Snowden, Examined.*

Are you acquainted with the operative classes?—Yes, having been a journeyman printer 20 years, and one half of the time foreman, and having been in different situations in our own societies, as well as connected with various other societies of operatives, I believe I am well acquainted with them.

In what way do they regard the fact of any one of their body receiving parochial relief?—I know that none but the worst characters would ever think of applying for parish relief; and that the respectable workmen consider it disgraceful. The other day, a list of those who received out-door parish relief was brought to a printing-office to be printed. One of the men saw on the list the name and address of one of the journeymen in the same office. This man was challenged with the fact, which he did not attempt to deny. He had been receiving as much as 6*s*. or 8*s*. a week out-door relief, during two years, for four children, although he had been in receipt of 36*s*. a week steady wages during the same time. The men stated the circumstance to the employer, and he was discharged.

Parochial relief
regarded as disrepu-
table by respectable
mechanics.

Did they request that he might be discharged?—The proceeding was tantamount to that, and of course the master acceded.

Suppose the whole of the relief were regulated by an independent, or say, a Government authority, on a fixed rule, that of not rendering the condition of the pauper within the workhouse so good as that of the lowest class of workmen living by his labour out of the house?—That of course, No reasonable man would, I should conceive, expect to have his condition in the workhouse bettered. I think a Government authority would be much the best, as the parish officers are now, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, interested parties.

Do you find any effect produced by men obtaining parochial relief readily when they are out of work, or have any thing the matter with them?—I have always seen that men who have had parish relief have been very careless of work and of their money ever afterwards. It has also acted very mischievously on the benefit societies, as these men would never contribute to them. We had a large and very good society of our own, which failed some time ago, and I have known the societies of other trades fail; and it has been a common complaint amongst us, that, but for the parish, they would have stood firm. I am myself confident, that, but for the parish, they would have stood firm.

Do you think that rendering a workman's wages attachable, when in work, as repayment for any relief which he may have had from the parish, would be serviceable as a remedy for the evil you have mentioned?—Yes, I think it would be highly useful in every point of view. I have no great hopes of the old ones who have had parish relief, but I have no doubt that it would make many of the young ones subscribe and keep themselves from the parish.

Do you think the body of operatives with whom you are acquainted would agree with you in this view?—Of course those who have been paupers would not agree; but all the respectable workmen would decidedly agree. I think that, in instances of real misfortune, which I have known occur, it would be thought better of, if the relief was given as a loan and not as a charity. But the workmen would generally object to any compulsory payment to guard against future liabilities.

Do you think the process of collecting this sort of repayment would be difficult?—I think not.

BASTARDY.

[See on this subject the evidence of Mr. Whateley, ante, p. 30; of Mr. Russell, p. 46; Mr. Price, p. 59; Mr. Brushfield, p. 125; Mr. Waite, p. 141; Mr. Single, p. 144; Mr. Andrews, p. 179; and Mr. Mott, p. 202.]

THE following is the substance of the examination of a witness of considerable observation of the habits of various classes of society, both in towns and the rural districts. For reasons which may be collected from some parts of the examination, he requested, before he was examined, that his name might not be made public, and the request was acceded to.

BASTARDY.

P. L. (A.)—III.

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"The

Appendix (A.)

Reports.

E. Chadwick,
Esq.

BASTARDY.

"The state of the law, which compels and enables a woman to swear her bastard child to whomsoever she pleases, and which then makes the party so sworn against liable to indemnify the parish for expenses incurred in lying-in, and the maintenance of the child, has many injurious effects.

"One of the most obvious is, that thereby innumerable marriages in all parts of England are brought about; and hence becoming pregnant, is the most direct method of becoming a wife. So many marriages have thus taken place after pregnancy, until at last it has become the general rule, not the exception, for parties not to marry until their sexual intercourse has produced pregnancy.

"The labourers, miners, and others of the working classes, are so familiarized with this mode of doing things that they no longer look on it as a disgrace; and on being spoken to on the subject have ready excuses at hand in its defence.

"I give instances which have occurred to myself; many more might be given if necessary.

"Of the feelings and opinions of women on this subject, I give the following instance:

"One day when I was at Northfleet, in Kent, I went into the house of one of the people who work at the chalk quarries, to buy fossils, and a young woman came in for a few minutes, whose appearance clearly showed approach to maternity. When she went out, I said to the woman of the house, 'Poor girl, she has been unfortunate;' to which she replied, 'Indeed she has, poor girl; and a virtuous, good girl she is too. The sad fellow has betrayed her, and forsaken her, and gone to sea.' To which I said, 'Shameful fellow; but she should not have trusted him, till she had been at church.' To this observation the woman replied to me, and, let me observe, her own children were all about her, 'What could she do, poor girl; if she did not do as other girls do, her sweetheart would say she did not love him, and she would never get a husband. Girls had need to consider well who they trust themselves to; but they are often deceived, and how can they help it?'

"This state of things leads directly to depravity; and in another way also operates to injure public morals. Many of the girls who had been disappointed in getting husbands, after becoming mothers, feel mortified, and come into towns, and take to a life of prostitution. That in most large towns, there is a surplus of women endeavouring to get a living by prostitution is very certain. Every circumstance which drives an additional number of women into the profession, increases the necessity of exertion on their part to allure men; and hence the extent of vice is increased beyond the quantity which might be expected to arise from the merely physical instincts of the men.

"The present practice leads to a great deal of deceit and perjury. A girl made pregnant by a married man, entices an unmarried man to have connexion with her, and then he is fixed on as the father, in preference to the married man. I have known numerous instances, young men in the shops of apothecaries and surgeons are often drawn in by such means.

"Some women will swear the child where they have no pretext whatever.

"Women in general, however, will feel some degree of remorse, unless the man shall have had sexual intercourse with them; but if that has taken place, although it shall have been months after the time of connexion, they feel little or no hesitation. They say the man has deserved it, and whether father or not he might have been, and so they get over it.

"I knew an instance of a dress-maker in Well-street, Oxford-street. She passed for a modest woman, and certainly was not exactly an open prostitute; yet seven of my friends got acquainted with her, and one introduced another. At last she was pregnant; and after this had taken place at least three months, a new friend of the seven became acquainted; and though he had only one private visit, and remained but a short while, she fastened on him as the father. It afterwards appeared that one of the seven had represented that this man was a gentleman of large fortune, which procured him this undeserved honour. She wrote, demanding money, and he gave her some to keep her quiet, and in hopes of getting clear of the honour of paternity; but it is very doubtful if he would have done so, if she had not had a fall, which brought on premature birth, and the child died.

"I was told by a gentleman near Langford, in Somersetshire, of a girl who laid twelve men under contribution of 5*l.* or 6*l.* each, he himself was one of them; and they were all afraid to say a word about it, until the girl at last fixed on a father, and swore before the magistrate.

"I have often been told of 5*l.* being given beforehand, with a promise of another 5*l.* when the child was sworn.

"Women publicly on the town, and women who occasionally prostitute themselves, will often distinctly avow, that they consider they have a right to swear a bastard child to any man who may have had sexual connexion with them. They say, the man deserves it, and has no right to complain; that he has done enough to become a father, and that it is only accident if he be not in that particular case. They will further say, that very likely such a man has been the real father in other instances, where he may have got off. Is it to be wondered at, that women will so reason, when legislators and administrators of the law will allow a prostitute to give evidence in such matters when they must know it is all hazard if she be correct.

"It is worthy of consideration, whether, even if the law should be altered in no other respect, it ought not to be allowed to a man to defend himself against the charge of a bastard child, by proving that the woman in question was a public prostitute; and whether the magistrate before whom the matter was in the first instance brought, and the magistrates at the quarter sessions on being satisfied that it was so, ought not to dismiss the case. It is clearly suborning perjury to make a prostitute swear in such a case, and an injustice to the man.

"The magistrates and parish officers lay a great temptation in the way of a girl to swear a bastard child to a gentleman in preference to a poor man, by giving a greater allowance per week, perhaps five, six or seven shillings, when in the case of the father being a journeyman

or

or labourer they would give only 2s. or 2s. 6d. This will always be sufficient to bias the girl's mind, and if ever the gentleman has been in such circumstances with her that he might have become the father, the girl settles it in her mind that he deserves it, and so swears the child.

"In country places, girls, from a motive of self interest, probably often swear the child in preference to a working man who is in such a situation that he will probably be induced to marry her.

"Girls, sometimes from affection for a favourite friend, will spare him, although they can have little doubt of his being the father, and will fix on some one else if they can. After being pregnant they will throw themselves in the way of a man whom they wish to make the father.

"Parishes have a corrupt motive for getting a girl to swear a child to a gentleman, not only because the working man runs away, and they get nothing, but a rich man is preferred to a shopkeeper or tradesman, because he will probably be got to give a much larger sum as an indemnity to the parish against loss. About 30*l.* will usually be taken from a poor tradesman, but in the case of a gentleman a much larger sum is demanded. A baronet, about 15 years ago, gave no less than 200*l.* to the parish of St. James's, Westminster. No doubt baronet fathers would always be favourites ever after. A mother who brought 200*l.* into the funds might reasonably expect greater liberality than one who swore to a father who ran away and gave nothing.

"Women of the town have more frequently become pregnant than is generally known or supposed. I knew an instance of a girl who was on the town; she became pregnant, and there was one of her particular friends whom she was accustomed to flatter with the prospect of being father. He contrived, however, to make her believe that he was going to settle out of town, and at last paid her the parting visit, and then kept out of the way for four months. At the end of that time he paid a visit, and was informed that a clerical gentleman had taken the office of father on himself voluntarily, to avoid the scandal of a public exposure. The same girl proved with child in about a year afterwards. But one is constantly meeting with instances. Now it is hardly possible that women on the town can know who may be the father. Yet the parish officers get the girl to swear the child on some one if they can. It is of no use to offer before the magistrate to produce indubitable proof of the girl being a regular prostitute. If she will swear that any particular individual is the father her oath is taken, and that is conclusive.

"If the girl be conscientious, and declare to the parish officers that she really cannot tell who may be the father, they threaten her with all the vengeance of the law, and a hundred vengeance more than the law ever dreams of, and generally her reluctance is overcome.

"Vestry clerks will make a boast of having served the parish by having at last by threats, made a girl find a father; and the vestries will applaud their exertions. It is true that they affect to assume that they believe that the woman has selected the real father; and in some instances it may be so.

"But when a woman who has been connected with a number of different men is made to swear to any one of them by fear of the treadmill, it is compulsory perjury, and fraud and injustice as well.

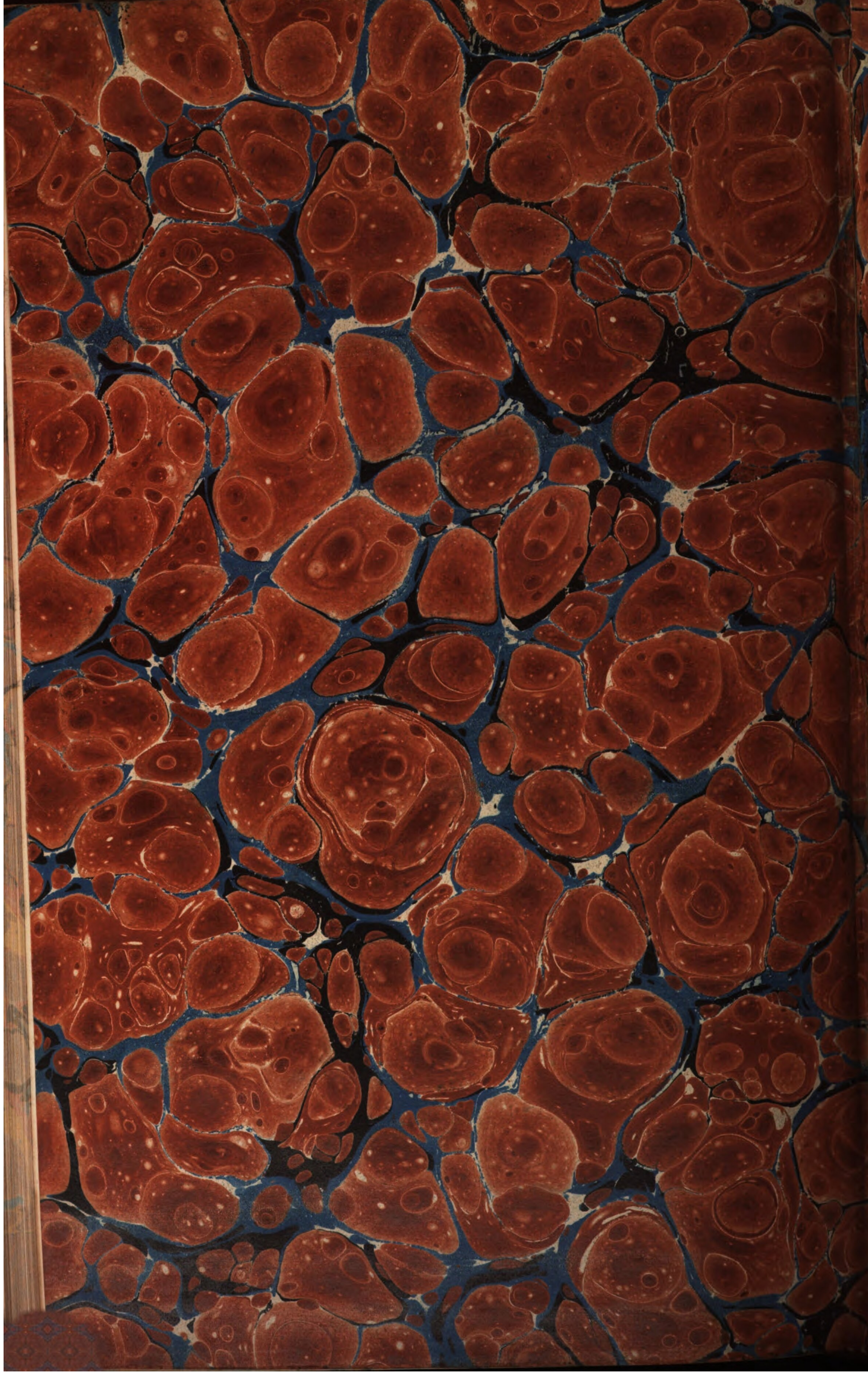
"The usual course with parishes is to withhold all relief until the woman will find a father; and she may thus be starved into compliance.

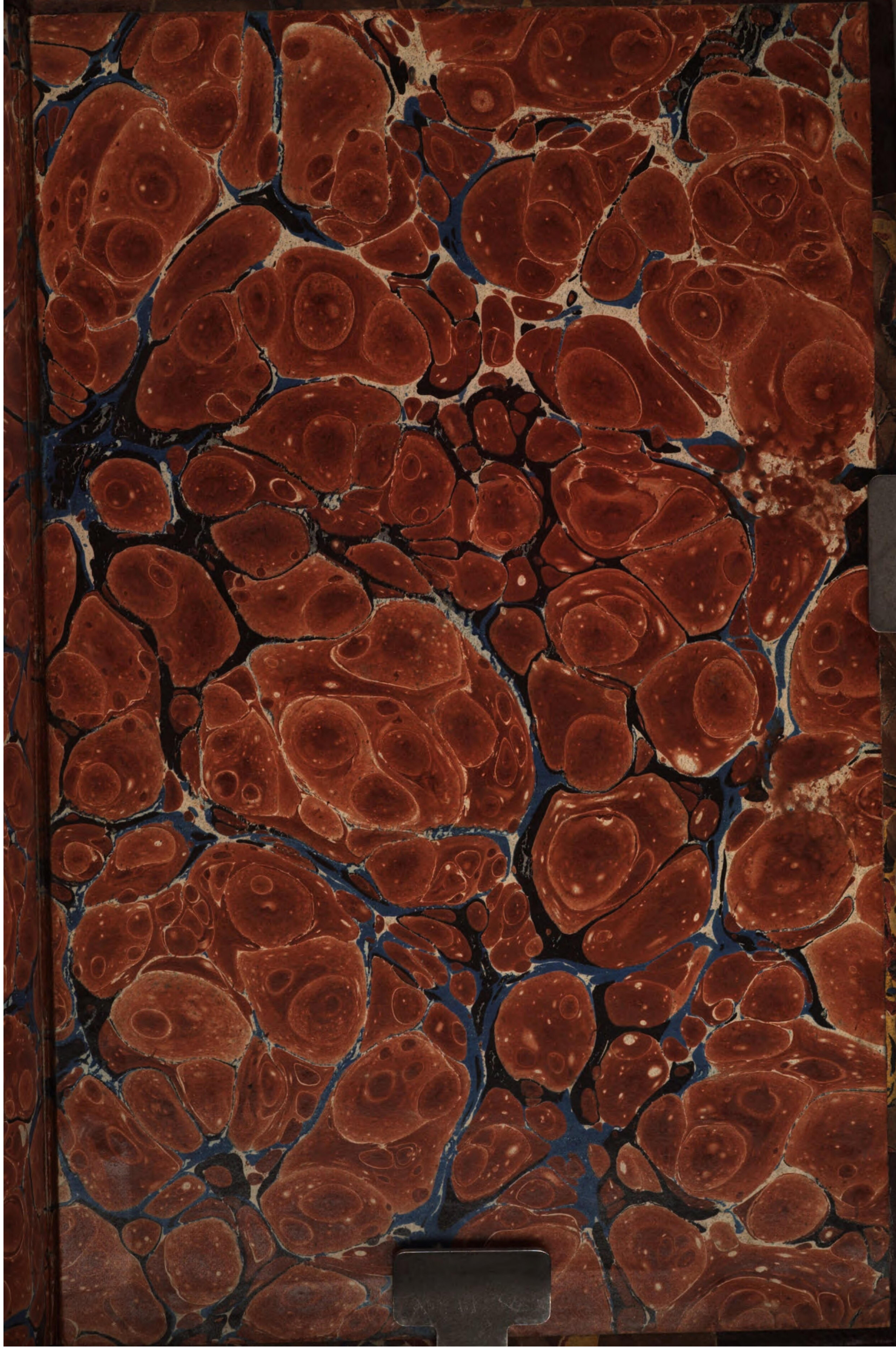
"There is, however, a difficulty about the case, if the law which calls on a woman to swear to the father still continue in force. A woman desirous of screening a favourite paramour would allege she did not know who the father was, and so he would get off.

"Much deceit is practised by men to escape merited paternity. One practice is to give to the female a false name and address, to appear very candid; they are in the Bank of England or some other large public situation, and give an address at the house of a friend who will take in any letters sent in that name. If the girl prove with child, the friend who took in the letters will say the party is gone abroad.

"Men in a low sphere of life, when subjected to an order of affiliation, soon move to another part of town, and the beadle reports that they have run away, and there the matter ends. Journeymen tradesmen favour one another. A journeyman tailor belonging to the house of call, the Robin Hood in Windmill-street, told me that it was the custom at that house, if any of the members was in fear of a laced-hat man, for that member to pay up the arrears he might owe to the house, and then the clerk would give him a certificate to any of the other houses of call in a distant part of the town in a *new name*, and he had only to remove to a distance and take his new name, and by means of the houses of call he got employment, and the parish heard no more of him. He said the same thing was done at all houses of call.

"Take it all in all the parishes are put to prodigious expense by bastardy. By looking at the accounts it will be seen how very little is obtained from the fathers, and how much is expended. If the father be a working man, not in any fixed employment, the London parishes never expect to get anything at all from him. In the country places the poor man cannot be hid; and as there is every where a surplus of labour, he cannot get employed except in his own parish, and it is only on his own parish that he has a claim for relief. Hence it is, that practically speaking the agricultural labourers are as much "*adscripti glebæ*" as in the times of the Saxons; and therefore if a man get into trouble about a bastard child he must either marry the woman or go off to be a soldier or a sailor, which only a small portion have the spirit to do."







Weil, Gustav / Lewald, August / Groß, Friedrich

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